

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION**
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalua Kalaima
a Ho'oponopono Ola*
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No. _____

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 224
RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION.**

by
Tommy Johnson, Director
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

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

Monday, January 27, 2025; 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225 & via Videoconference

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

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) supports Senate Bill (SB) 224, which proposes DCR collaborate with other agencies to inform and assist inmates in obtaining identifying documents as soon as practicable or within established time frames.

DCR is currently working with the City and County to secure additional State Identification machines to supplement the current machine at Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF). Additionally, DCR orders birth certificates for inmates, as necessary. DCR also assists inmates in obtaining social security cards through a Memorandum of Agreement with the Social Security Administration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support on SB 224.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

COMMISSIONERS
HON. R. MARK BROWNING (ret.)

HON. RONALD IBARRA (ret.)

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HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
E HUIKALA A MA'EMA'E NŌ
235 S. Beretania Street, 16th Floor
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 587-4160

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

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 224, Relating to Identification
Hearing: Monday, January 27, 2025; 3:00pm
State Capitol, Room 225

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

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) **supports** Senate Bill 224, Relating to Identification, which will not only affect the timeliness in which people in custody are *informed* of departmental assistance in obtaining applicable identification documents, but also the timeliness in which they *receive assistance* in obtaining their identification documents.

First and foremost, the HCSOC acknowledges the Department's ongoing collaboration with the DMV and the efforts to expand identification processing capabilities at the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) and the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). While the DCR has made progress in collaborating with agencies and facilitating access to identification documents, the Commission found that the Department has not fully met the statutory requirements under §353H-32. Significant gaps remain in informing people in custody about available assistance, prioritizing support for those within one year of release, adhering to prescribed timelines, and providing forms in the individual's primary language.

The Commission found that even though legislative funds have been allocated for this purpose, the DCR reported that, of the 10,580 individuals released since 2022, only 150 received identification cards with DCR assistance, and just 32 of these were provided at no cost. A total of approximately \$61,800 was spent on this identification effort, with \$1,280 directly funding identification card issuance and the remaining \$60,000 allocated to infrastructure.

In addressing §353H-32(b), the DCR has made progress through an MOU with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to assist people in custody in obtaining Social Security cards. Despite this progress, further collaboration with federal, state, and county agencies is needed to streamline access to birth certificates and other relevant identification documents. The MOU limits eligibility to those with confirmed release dates within 120 days, excluding individuals with less than six weeks remaining and

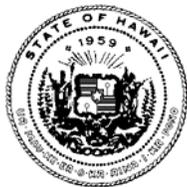
parolees who typically receive only two weeks' notice. This approach does not align with the statutory requirement to assist PIC *within the one-year period prior to parole or release*. Again, the HCSOC does not recommend discontinuing the use of the SSA MOU, but rather finding additional ways for expansion. Additionally, DCR does not consistently inform people in custody about the availability of this assistance, leaving a statutory obligation unmet.

Ensuring individuals receive their identification cards upon release from correctional facilities significantly impacts a formerly incarcerated person's ability to reintegrate into society by providing access to basic necessities like housing, employment, and social services, which are often inaccessible without proper identification. This ultimately impacts the overall population by potentially reducing recidivism rates and promoting successful reentry.

This low number of identification cards issued, especially those provided at no cost, suggests the need for a more effective and efficient strategy, as providing identification is essential for successful reentry. This includes starting the identification application process upon admission to custody, allowing sufficient time to gather required documents and ensure successful identification issuance before release.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
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TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

January 26, 2025

TO: The Honorable Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 224 – RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION.**

Hearing: January 27, 2025, 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this measure, defers to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and provides clarification. DHS clarifies that identification documents such as birth certificates are used to access social services, including Medicaid; however, a government-issued identification *card* is not a current requirement.

PURPOSE: Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, to assist inmates in obtaining the inmates' civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society, as soon as practicable. Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to initiate the process of obtaining identifying documents for inmates released to work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs, by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain civil identification cards and other identifying documents to the inmate as soon as practicable.

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

Rebecca V. Like
Prosecuting Attorney



Keola Siu
First Deputy
Prosecuting Attorney

OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs
Thirty-third State Legislature
Regular session of 2025
State of Hawai'i
January 27, 2025

RE: SB 224 Relating to Identification

Dear Chair Elefante:

Our Office provides the testimony below in strong SUPPORT of SB 224 which would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to assist inmates in obtaining identification.

Obtaining these documents is critical to the successful re-entry and reintegration of released inmates. Without these documents, newly released individuals cannot secure insurance, a phone line, housing, access to programs, employment and other services critical to their successful reintegration into society.

Our Office through a federal grant has started the E Ho'i I Ka Piko reentry program. The first goal of the program is to make sure that newly released individuals have identification. Similarly, our Office has started a Mental Health diversion program where in addition to helping individuals get insurance, our first step in the program is assisting them in securing identification.

Our Office looks forward to working with DCR in ensuring that individuals reentering society are able to secure identification cards as soon as practicable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-224

Submitted on: 1/24/2025 8:20:56 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/27/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Testifying for Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

All of these measures are essential to effective re-integration into the community for inmates and absolutely should be in place by the date of the individual's release.

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

Monday, January 27, 2025 3:00 PM Room 225

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 224 RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION

Chair Elefante and members of the committee:

Thank you for hearing this measure and for the opportunity to submit testimony in support.

Waikiki Health is a Federally Qualified Health Center providing primary care as a core service at multiple clinics in Waikiki, McCully/Moiliili, Kaimuki, and by means of mobile medical unit. We also operate our Pu'uhonua Prison Program, a model reentry program, which assists incarcerated men and women in returning to the community and avoiding homelessness and recidivism.

We have discussed the amendments proposed in this measure with our program specialist and support its passage.

Mahalo again for the opportunity to submit testimony.



Alexis Charpentier (MPH), Chief Executive Officer

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

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

Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor



COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Brandon Elefante, Chair

Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Room 225 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

3:00 PM

SUPPORT FOR SB 224 - IDENTIFICATION

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai 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 3,717 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars¹ and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation on any given day. We are always mindful that 928 - 29% - of Hawai'i's imprisoned male population 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 **support of SB 224** that requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, to assist inmates in obtaining the inmates' civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society, as soon as practicable. Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to initiate the process of obtaining identifying documents for inmates released to work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs, by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain

¹ DCR Weekly Population Report, January 20, 2025

<https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2025-01-20.pdf>

civil identification cards and other identifying documents to the inmate as soon as practicable.

Hawai'i did pass a law in 2017; here is information from the National Council of State Legislatures.²

"Hawaii | § 353H, HB No 845 (2017). The department will inform inmates that departmental assistance is available to obtain civil identification cards and, upon request, will issue the cards to individuals who have less than one year remaining. Here is information from the National Council of State Legislators."

This bill is important in that it strengthens the law by requiring that the civil identification card must be issued *"as soon as practicable but at least one year before the individual's parole or release date."* It also *"requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to initiate the process of obtaining identifying documents for inmates released to work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs, by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain civil identification cards and other identifying documents to the inmate as soon as practicable."*

In this age of technology, identification documents such as id cards, birth certificates, social security cards, etc. are vital to participate fully in life. Reintegration is difficult for people who have been incarcerated for many years. The world looks and operates quite differently now. A civil identification card is not enough with REAL ID being needed to obtain a drivers license, employment, housing, a bank account, etc.

Here is an Overview from NCSL:

21 states have laws aimed at helping previous offenders get identification either at release or immediately following. But these laws vary.

17 states provide permanent identification cards to those being released, while Utah and New York both provide temporary ID cards.

Mississippi, North Carolina, Nevada and Wisconsin explicitly provide for driver's licenses, allowing those who receive them to immediately drive.

9 states – Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Texas and Washington – provide state identification cards, sometimes referred to as civil identification cards,

² **Providing Identification for Those Released From Incarceration**, Updated January 04, 2024.

<https://www.ncsl.org/civil-and-criminal-justice/providing-identification-for-those-released-from-incarceration>

non-driver identification cards or state identification cards. These allow individuals many privileges in society, but do not include the driving privilege. Most recently, Georgia passed SB 218 (2023) which grants authority for their Department of Corrections and Department of Driver Services, in coordination, to provide a personal identification card to any resident of the state upon completion of their term of incarceration.

3 states – Alabama, Mississippi and Oklahoma that would provide identification for individuals leaving incarceration, **Alabama’s legislation was enacted.** Alabama’s [HB 2 \(2021\)](#) requires the Department of Corrections to provide inmates with a social security card and birth certificate. Additionally, the Department of Corrections is directed to work with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency to assist inmates in receiving a non-driver state identification card.

Mississippi and Oklahoma’s legislation failed to pass but they demonstrate two different approaches to legislation. Mississippi’s [SB 2561 \(2021\)](#) was a targeted approach that would create a six-month provisional driver’s license. [Oklahoma’s HB 2729 \(2021\)](#) would create the Oklahoma Prisoner Reentry Pilot Program which would provide a plethora of reentry services, including assisting reentering inmates with obtaining driver licenses or state identification cards.

West Virginia took yet another approach, creating a program to stay unpaid court costs that effectively allows individuals to apply for identification cards as though they do not owe any costs, so long as they continue to make their repayment plan payments. Unpaid court costs remain a common barrier to identification cards for individuals reentering society.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports providing individuals with proper identification documents as an all-important strategy for successful reentry. To that end, we share a link to a 38-page document from the U.S. Department of Transportation called: **Leading Practices Toolkit Concerning Government-Issued Identification for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals.**³

³ **Leading Practices Toolkit Concerning Government-Issued Identification for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals**, U.S. Department of Transportation.

<https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2025-01/Leading-Practices-Toolkit-Concerning-Government-Issued-Identification-for-Formerly-Incarcerated-Individuals.pdf>

Mahalo nui for staying on top of this very important issue, Chair Elefante! Community Alliance on Prisons appreciates the PSM Committee for introducing this bill. We will be working to support this bill so it can cross the finish line! And we hope that the resources we have provided are helpful to policymakers and the various agencies involved in identification documents. Collaboration is absolutely necessary to get this right!

Mahalo nui for inviting Community Alliance on Prisons and the general public to be part of this discussion!

Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i

January 27, 2025

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

Hearing Time: 3:00PM

Location: State Capitol Conference Room 225

Re: SB224, Relating to identification

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

On behalf of the Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i hui, we are writing in **strong support of SB224, relating to identification**. This bill requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, to assist inmates in obtaining the inmates' civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society, as soon as practicable. The bill also requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to initiate the process of obtaining identifying documents for inmates released to work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs, by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain civil identification cards and other identifying documents to the inmate as soon as practicable.

For many incarcerated individuals, a lack of proper identification is a significant barrier to reentry into society. Without these essential documents, they face difficulties accessing employment, housing, healthcare, and other critical services. By requiring the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to proactively assist inmates with obtaining identification before release, this bill addresses a fundamental issue that often impedes reintegration. The requirement to initiate this process for inmates participating in furlough or community placement programs is particularly important. These programs are designed to help individuals transition back into society, and ensuring they have the necessary identification aligns with the programs' goals of fostering independence and reducing reliance on social safety nets.

The legislation is also a practical investment in public safety. Research consistently shows that providing reentry support reduces recidivism, thereby lowering costs associated with reincarceration and enhancing community wellbeing. By addressing this common—and solvable—problem, SB224 will help individuals contribute positively to society upon their release.

Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i is a collaboration of organizations and individuals committed to reducing the harmful effects of a punitive incarceration system for youth; promoting equity in the justice system; and improving and increasing resources to address adolescent and young adult mental health needs. We seek to improve the continuity of programs and services for youth and young adults transitioning from minor to adult status; eliminate youth homelessness and housing market discrimination against young adults; and promote and fund more holistic and culturally informed approaches among public/private agencies serving youth.

Please support SB224.

1099 Alakea Street, Suite 2530 | Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 | (808) 447-1840

LATE

LATE

SB-224

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 2:58:01 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/27/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Young	Testifying for Roar cares	Support	In Person

Comments:

We support.

SB-224

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 12:50:28 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/27/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael EKM Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Its both common sense and commonly decent in its approach to released inmates and is something we should have been doing all along. These people deserve, at least, the bare minimum of support to get on their own two feet after being behind bars for so long. If we want to decrease our overflowing prison systems on this island, we should support bills such as these. Even if this is a practice already done in certain prisons, it won't hurt to have it required by law so that whoever runs the prison next isn't as charitable as their predecessor.

LATE

SB-224

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 11:28:08 PM
Testimony for PSM on 1/27/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Veronica Moore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair
Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Public Safety and Military Affairs Senate Committee Members
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: January 26, 2025

RE: Upcoming Hearing for SB 224

Measure Title: RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION

Report Title: DCR; Offender Reentry; Identification Documents; Departmental Assistance

To All Concerned,

My name is Veronica Moore and I am in support of Senate Bill 224 as I believe it will help to further successful reentry for the individuals in the custody of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Thank you for introducing this bill.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore

SB-224

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:25:10 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/27/2025 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sylvie Madison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-224

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:57:27 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/27/2025 3:00:00 PM

LATE

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

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Committee members,

My name is Carolyn Eaton and I am a resident of Makiki, and an enthusiastic supporter of the Hawai'i State Correctional Oversight Commission and the important work in this area you are doing.

I strongly support this measure to ensure incarcerated people in the State's care are prepared for reentry when the day of release arrives. At minimum, each should have his, or her, identifying documents.

The testimony provided by Community Alliance on Prisons (CAP) is exhaustive in describing the paths to assist with reentry other states have enacted.

Unfortunately, my testimony today is late, but I will follow the course this bill takes with great interest and appreciation for your thoughtful work.

Mahalo,