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STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
AND REHABILITATION**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalua Kalaima  
a Ho'oponopono Ola*  
1177 Alakea Street  
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No. \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 153  
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION TO  
INCRIMENTALLY AND SYSTEMATICALLY REDUCE THE NUMBER OF INMATES  
INCARCERATED IN PRIVATE, OUT-OF-STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

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

Friday, April 11, 2025; 3:05 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 the intent** of House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 153, which requests that DCR incrementally and systematically reduce the number of inmates incarcerated in private, out-of-state facilities. HCR 153 also requests the DCR submit to the legislature, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030, a report of DCR's progress in reducing the number of inmate incarcerated in private, out-of-state facilities.

DCR understands the intent of HCR 153 to return its inmates incarcerated in private out-of-state facilities, and shares the Legislature's frustration and concerns raised regarding housing inmates in facilities far from home. DCR would have returned the inmates long ago, but for the lack of space in its correctional facilities in which to house them, including the lack of appropriate rehabilitation programs for these inmates, DCR has no other choice but to send them to private out-of-state facilities. Unfortunately, the DCR has no control over when and/or how many persons are sentenced by the court to DCR's custody and care.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the intent of HCR 153.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



MARK PATTERSON  
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON  
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

COMMISSIONERS  
HON. R. MARK BROWNING (ret.)

HON. RONALD IBARRA (ret.)

MARTHA TORNEY

HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION**  
**E HUIKALA A MA'EMA'E NŌ**  
235 S. Beretania Street, 16<sup>th</sup> 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: House Concurrent Resolution 153, Requesting the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to incrementally and systemically reduce the number of inmates incarcerated in private, out-of-state correctional facilities.  
Hearing: Friday, April 11, 2025; 3:05 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 225

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

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) **supports** House Concurrent Resolution 153, requesting the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to incrementally and systemically reduce the number of inmates incarcerated in private, out-of-state correctional facilities.

One of the most critical components of successful rehabilitation and reintegration is maintaining strong ties with family and community. Research consistently shows that individuals who sustain familial relationships during incarceration experience lower recidivism rates and better post-release outcomes. When individuals are housed out of state, the financial and logistical burdens on families—such as the cost of travel, time off work, and lodging—often render in-person visitation impossible. This forced separation exacerbates emotional distress, weakens family bonds, and deprives individuals of a key stabilizing force necessary for their successful reintegration.

Additionally, the Commission has found that those housed at the Saguaro Correctional Facility have different expectations and disciplinary sanctions in comparison to Hawaii correctional facilities. A prime example of this is the “SHIP” housing program which houses individuals in restrictive housing for one year whereas Hawaii facilities do not allow placement in restrictive housing for more than 60 days.

For these reasons, the Commission supports House Concurrent Resolution 153. Should you have additional questions, the Oversight Coordinator, Christin Johnson, can be reached at 808-900-2200 or at [christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov](mailto:christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

# ACLU Hawai'i

Committee: Public Safety and Military Affairs  
Hearing Date/Time: Friday, April 11, 2025, at 3:05pm  
Place: Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference  
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of HCR 153**

Dear Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Committee Members:

**The ACLU of Hawai'i is in strong support of HCR 153. We thank the committee on PSM for unanimously passing a similar bill, SCR126, earlier in this session.** It is time to end the state's relationship with private prison operators like CoreCivic, which profit from the suffering of incarcerated individuals and have proven to repeatedly violate their legal rights. Currently, nearly 1,000 individuals in the custody of the Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation ("DCR") are incarcerated at Saguaro Correctional Center ("Saguaro"), operated by CoreCivic (formerly CCA).

Further, there is space in our **prison** facilities to bring people back home. It is a matter of finding the will to do so. The 04/07/25 DCR report: SNF has 0 individuals currently incarcerated, operational capacity of 132. HMSF has 798 individuals, operational capacity of 992. KCF has 80 individuals currently, operational capacity of 200. WCF has 158 individuals currently, and an operational capacity of 334. (Note, pretrial detainees are held in jail and not in prisons).

**HCR 153** presents an opportunity to phase out reliance on bad partners like CoreCivic. States like Illinois, Minnesota, Nevada, California, and Washington have demonstrated that it is possible for governments to take action to discontinue their reliance on for-profit prisons.

- For example, [California](#) implemented a multi-stage plan over seven years to exit its contracts with private prisons out of state, private prisons in state, and public-private partnerships in prisons. It is time to bring people back home. This was a strong show of leadership from state prison officials and Governor Gavin Newsom.
- [Nevada](#) ended its private prison contracts through legislation, and experienced record lows in prison mortality immediately after. Bringing people back to state prisons did not increase violence.

Although CoreCivic owns and operates Saguaro, the State of Hawai'i remains responsible for the health and safety of the people incarcerated in Arizona. The systemic harms that have occurred at Saguaro since it opened in 2007 include incidents of violence, murders and deaths, allegations of unsafe drinking water, and lack of meaningful oversight and staffing that has led to issues with drug smuggling and solitary confinement. On August 20, 2024, the Department of Justice announced that it is investigating civil rights violations around conditions at CoreCivic's Trousdale Turner Correctional Center in Tennessee. The launch of this federal investigation is the latest in a long line of incidents that have plagued CoreCivic, and is emblematic of the serious civil rights violations that occur in the private for-profit prison system.

It is time to bring Hawai'i individuals back home. We can no longer contract out core governmental responsibilities over public safety and individual rights.

### ***Documented Physical Assaults and Murders***

The track record of violent assaults and deaths that has accumulated at Saguaro aligns with compelling evidence that private prisons are far more dangerous to incarcerated individuals than government-run facilities. In 2016, the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found “serious or systemic safety and security deficiencies at contract prisons,” including inmates being improperly housed in segregated units and a lack of strong oversight.<sup>1</sup>

While the long-standing systemic constitutional violations against Hawai'i residents in Saguaro are outlined in more detail in the attached appendix, recent incidents within the past year relating to physical assaults, deaths and drug smuggling underscore the need to pass HCR 153/HR148:

- In May of 2024, Anton Myklebust of Hawai'i was found dead in his cell and is believed to have been assaulted. He was scheduled for release in October 2024. His death highlights the lack of sufficient oversight and staffing at private prisons like Saguaro, and the failure to establish accountability for his death.
- On July 27, 2024, Daniel Kosi, 51, from Hawai'i suffered approximately 50 stab wounds to his head and upper body while in an administrative segregation unit at Saguaro Correctional Center. This attack has come under scrutiny because inmates in the administrative segregation unit should have two corrections officers accompany every prisoner exiting their cells, but Kosi did not.

These recent incidents are eerily similar to the brutal murder of Bronson Nunuha at Saguaro prison in 2010. Bronson was murdered in Saguaro Prison's “Special Housing Incentive Program,” or SHIP. Only one employee was present to oversee approximately 50 prisoners in the SHIP unit where Bronson was housed. On February 18, 2010, an employee of Saguaro opened Bronson's cell door and then left, allowing two gang members to attack Bronson in his cell. Bronson was beaten and stabbed over 140 times. His assailants carved the name of their gang into his chest and even had time to leave his cell, shower and change clothes before staff knew that Bronson had been killed. In the same year that Bronson was killed, Clifford Medina, a twenty-three-year-old from Hawai'i was choked to death at Saguaro.<sup>2</sup>

Without an end to private prison usage, more people at Saguaro will die separated from their loved ones and home thousands of miles away.

### ***Contaminated, Unsafe Drinking Water at Saguaro***

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<sup>1</sup> In 2016, the DOJ found private prisons more dangerous than public prisons, noting that private prisons have higher rates of assaults and 50% more incidents of illicit weapons. DOJ attributed the elevated danger in private prisons to factors such as lower inmate to officer ratios, chronic understaffing, long shifts, and less staff training. These elevated risks impact both incarcerated people and staff.

<sup>2</sup> The ACLU of Hawai'i participated in the representation of the families of Bronson Nunuha and Clifford Medina.

<https://www.civilbeat.org/?p=15917lawsuit-filed-over-death-of-second-arizona-inmate/>

In October 2024, ACLU of Hawai‘i sent a letter to DCR and CoreCivic<sup>3</sup>, demanding an investigation into allegedly contaminated and unsafe drinking water provided to the nearly 1,000 Hawai‘i individuals incarcerated at Saguaro prison.

Over the past several months, the ACLU of Hawai‘i has received reports from multiple individuals incarcerated at Saguaro that the facility’s drinking water has a foul taste and smell and is causing serious health problems, particularly for elderly individuals and those with preexisting medical conditions.

According to first-hand accounts shared with the ACLU of Hawai‘i, the water at Saguaro has a “heavily chlorinated” taste and a “greasy, viscous” feel—one that leaves an “awful after taste” in the back of the throat. Incarcerated individuals also reported that the standing water in the cells’ toilets make each cell “smell like chlorine.” Prisoners who drink and bathe in the water reported that it causes burning eyes, cracked and bleeding skin (or “alligator skin”), gastrointestinal issues, and other physiological distress. Prisoners reported that the situation is so dire that they resort to melting ice cubes from the ice machine, which has a filter, to obtain clean water.<sup>4</sup>

While ACLU of Hawai‘i has received reports that Saguaro has since provided filtered drinking water for Hawaii’s incarcerated population, the source of the contamination remains unresolved. Moreover, Hawai‘i residents incarcerated at Saguaro continue to shower in this unsafe water, raising potential violations under the U.S. Constitution’s prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment, federal disability discrimination laws, and the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. This is morally unconscionable and violates the constitutional rights of the people incarcerated at Saguaro.

### ***CoreCivic has created unique harms for Hawai'i individuals***

CoreCivic’s operation of Saguaro prison has created new problems for Hawai‘i. Out-of-state transfers have directly resulted in the formation of bona fide security threat groups (aka gangs)<sup>5</sup>,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.acluhi.org/en/press-releases/SaguaroDemandLetter>

<sup>4</sup> Compounding these issues, Saguaro’s commissary sells prisoners bottled water at almost \$15 per case, which is almost three times the price of what the same product would cost outside the prison. Incarcerated individuals reported being unable to afford enough water to meet their daily intake given that the prison pays 25 cents per hour of labor. Prior to ACLU-Hawaii issuing a demand letter, Saguaro also refused to make Brita pitchers and filters available, despite listing them as items on its “Allowable Personal Property List.”

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2017/11/nevadas-most-dangerous-inmates-move-in-with-hawaii-prisoners/>

gang-related violence, and long-term solitary confinement<sup>6</sup> through its SHIP program.<sup>7</sup> It also has resulted in the spread of new diseases not found in Hawai'i.<sup>8</sup>

Further, issues of poor staffing and operation of the Saguaro prison put Hawai'i individuals at risk. Recent examples highlight the serious consequences that result:

- In October 2024, Soosoo Motu, 36, from Hawai'i died of an apparent suicide at Saguaro while serving a 10-year sentence for robbery. Motu was held in administrative segregation unit at the time of his death, despite solitary confinement being a common factor in suicidal action.<sup>9</sup>
- A CoreCivic employee was arrested on June 20<sup>th</sup> of 2024 for attempting to smuggle methamphetamine into the Saguaro facility. This is a grave concern given the methamphetamine-related deaths at Saguaro of Richard Keokeo Taylor Jr. (Hawai'i) in the fall of 2023 and Clark Cleveland (Idaho) on June 17, 2024.

These incidents are part of a consistent trend of poor staffing at CoreCivic facilities. Recently, Florida and Tennessee imposed millions of dollars in fines against CoreCivic specifically for failing to sufficiently staff facilities and prevent violence.<sup>10</sup> See Appendix B for more.

### *Oversight has been Ineffective*

CoreCivic is in the business of generating the greatest possible profits. Providing safe and humane conditions of confinement to the human beings in their custody is — at best — a distant secondary goal. Hawai'i remains responsible for its citizens in custody, even (and especially) if these individuals are held in a private facility far from home.

Yet for over 20 years, Hawai'i failed to provide meaningful oversight of CoreCivic's prisons, including Saguaro prison in Arizona. From 1995 to 2019, the state relied upon the Department of Public Safety (now DCR) to provide oversight over itself. During this time, a tragic history of death, sickness, and harm unfolded at Saguaro with no concerted efforts to fix conditions or question Hawai'i's relationship with CoreCivic.

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<sup>6</sup> "Solitary confinement goes by many names, including "special housing units," "administrative segregation," "disciplinary segregation," and "restrictive housing," but the conditions are generally the same: 22 to 24 hours per day spent alone in a small cell." Prison Policy Initiative

[https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2020/12/08/solitary\\_symposium/](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2020/12/08/solitary_symposium/)

<sup>7</sup> SHIP, or the Special Housing Incentive Program, is a form of solitary confinement or segregation. See:

<https://oip.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/OIP-Op.-Ltr.-No.-F18-03-Granillo-re-PSD.pdf>

The ACLU has created reports on the inhumane and ineffective implementation of solitary confinement:

[https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/publications/stop\\_solitary\\_briefing\\_paper\\_updated\\_august\\_2014.pdf](https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/publications/stop_solitary_briefing_paper_updated_august_2014.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2016/09/only-215-hawaii-inmates-were-tested-for-valley-fever-in-arizona/>

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2016/06/a-deadly-dust-is-plaguing-hawaii-prisoners-in-arizona/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Act-234-DEATH-NOTIFICATION-MOTU-Soosoo.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> [https://nashvillebanner.com/2024/11/21/tennessee-lawmakers-question-corecivic/#:~:text=Since%20that%20time%2C%20the%20company,physical%20violence%20and%20sexual%20abuse](https://nashvillebanner.com/2024/11/21/tennessee-lawmakers-question-corecivic/#:~:text=Since%20that%20time%2C%20the%20company,physical%20violence%20and%20sexual%20abuse;); [https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/county-to-discuss-reinstating-jail-fines/article\\_91587a41-abb8-5900-930d-226737700561.html](https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/county-to-discuss-reinstating-jail-fines/article_91587a41-abb8-5900-930d-226737700561.html)

DCR's own onsite contract monitors from Hawai'i have failed to routinely inspect prisons in a manner that prevents harm from occurring. Further, when disturbances or deaths do occur, Hawai'i's contract monitors have not responded in an exigent manner to conduct investigative fact-finding.

Despite efforts of the newly created Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission, there are structural barriers to robust oversight inherent to sending individuals thousands of miles from home to a prison not run by the state. These include the prohibitive cost and time of flights for facility visits, an expense that also makes visits by family, counsel, and community extremely burdensome. Without these official and informal connections to Hawai'i, it is harder for incarcerated individuals to rehabilitate, to express concerns about facility conditions, and to advocate for themselves. The Commission also lacks the staffing capacity, travel funding, and influence over CoreCivic that would be needed to protect Hawai'i individuals in Arizona.

To date, Hawai'i has rarely ever fined CoreCivic for failing to fulfill the terms of its contract – whether for understaffing, failure to provide programming and treatment services, and failing to ensure secure facilities and safe conditions of confinement. A 2010 state audit found that Hawai'i officials circumvented the law in partnering with CoreCivic, and “readily accepted CCA’s representations and conclusions of its performance without verifying statements against documented evidence.”<sup>11</sup> Despite this, Hawai'i continues to reward CoreCivic’s bad behavior by renewing and expanding its contracts without considering alternatives and a strategic exit plan. These failed oversight measures highlight that Hawai'i cannot afford to let more of its individuals suffer at Saguaro with little to no protection.

### **Passage of HCR 153 is important for Hawai'i to uphold its responsibilities**

Hawai'i has a legal responsibility to ensure the safe and humane treatment of people incarcerated within their own jails and prisons, as well as out-of-state private prisons. In handing over its duties to CoreCivic, DCR has denied its responsibility and created serious gaps in transparency and accountability. The lack of accountability is especially dangerous because of the horrifying record of physical assaults and deaths at Saguaro and other CoreCivic facilities. The incidents documented in this letter are only a fraction of the harm that Hawai'i individuals have been suffering in private prisons since 1995. CoreCivic has demonstrated a willingness to look the other way on issues of health and violence for incarcerated individuals.

Ending private prison contracts will enable Hawai'i to better protect its incarcerated individuals from the harms that have arisen at the Saguaro facility. Allowing for individuals to remain close to home will improve rehabilitative outcomes and allow incarcerated individuals to remain connected to family, community, and land. It will also ensure that responsibility and accountability for incarceration will lie squarely with DCR, and that profit is not a motive driving our justice system. Please support **HCR 153**.

Sincerely,  
Nathan Lee  
Policy Legislative Fellow

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<sup>11</sup> <https://files.hawaii.gov/auditor/Reports/2010/10-10.pdf>

Carrie Ann Shirota  
Policy Director

*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 founded in 1965 that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds.*

## APPENDIX A:

### **Timeline of Relevant Incidents Related to CCA/CoreCivic, Hawai'i inmates in contracted out-of-state private prisons, and private prisons:**

**September 2024-** Reports from family members with loved ones at Saguaro prison of biohazard feces leak in the main room areas and in the cells.

**August 2024-** The U.S. Department of Justice launches an investigation into CoreCivic's Trousdale Turner Correctional Center in Tennessee.<sup>12</sup>

**July 27, 2024-** An incarcerated person from Hawai'i suffered approximately 50 stab wounds to his head and upper body while in an administrative segregation unit at Saguaro Correctional Center. This attack has come under scrutiny because inmates in the administrative segregation unit should have had two corrections officers accompany every prisoner exiting their cells.<sup>13</sup>

**June 2024-** Reports emerge of price gouging of incarcerated people transplanted from Hawai'i at Saguaro Correctional Center, with commissary pricing increasing 200-300%. There are complaints that these incarcerated people are being charged different prices than those from other states. Commissary pricing is under the control of CoreCivic and cannot be directly controlled by the state.<sup>14</sup>

**May 4, 2024-** Anton Myklebust, of Hawai'i who was set to be released in October 2024 after serving 20 years, died in Saguaro Correctional Center. Myklebust was found unresponsive in his cell and is believed to have been assaulted. His death highlights the lack of sufficient oversight and staffing at private prisons like Saguaro.<sup>15</sup>

**September 2022-** The Oklahoma Watch reports that at least 18 people were stabbed (and three murdered) at CoreCivic's Davis Correctional Facility in Oklahoma. These deaths included the first correction officer killed on duty since 2000 in the state.<sup>16</sup> Davis Correctional Facility faced significant understaffing problems, and Bobby Cleveland (then executive director of Oklahoma Corrections Professionals) noted that "every week I look at it, it says Davis (locked down)—not enough staff... They're (locking) down constantly because they don't have enough staff."

**July 30, 2021-** CoreCivic's facility in Shelby, Montana was without water for three days. An incarcerated person who spoke to the Montana State News Bureau during the three-day crisis reported that the supply of bottled water was inadequate and that prison toilets were overflowing with human waste because the promised portable toilets had failed to appear. On August 2, 2021,

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-announces-civil-rights-investigation-conditions-tennessees-trousdale>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2024/08/more-details-emerge-on-attack-of-hawaii-inmate-in-an-arizona-prison/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2024/06/prices-have-abruptly-skyrocketed-at-the-arizona-prison-that-houses-many-hawaii-inmates/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/beat/hawaii-inmate-in-an-arizona-prison-dies-after-apparently-being-attacked/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://oklahomawatch.org/2022/09/16/stabbings-soar-at-southeast-oklahoma-private-prison/>

two incarcerated people were arguing with guards over their continued inability to remove fecal matter from their living area when a fight broke out, leaving three guards hospitalized.<sup>17</sup>

**June 8, 2019-** Hawai'i inmate Justin Fuller claims he was raped by corrections officer Christina Lopez, who was later fired and pled guilty to a charge of unlawful sexual conduct in Saguaro prison. Fuller also alleges CoreCivic attempted to stop him from sharing his version of events and from filing a lawsuit by retaliating against him in prison — throwing him into solitary confinement, and blocking him from calling lawyers and a sexual-assault reporting hotline.<sup>18</sup>

**August 2015-** Jonathan Namauleg, a 21-year-old incarcerated individual from Hawai'i, was fatally strangled by his cellmate Jason McCormick at Saguaro Correctional Center. Investigation arose regarding why Namauleg, serving a three-year sentence for third degree arson, was housed with McCormick, serving a life sentence for second-degree murder.<sup>19</sup>

**2015-** At an Oklahoma prison operated by CoreCivic, ten incarcerated individuals were involved in a fight on February 25, 2015 that left five with stab wounds. The following month, eight more were involved in another stabbing incident. In June of that year, thirty-three gang members fought with weapons and eleven prisoners were sent to a hospital. On September 12, 2015, four inmates were killed during a riot at the same facility. According to an investigation by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, video evidence of the September 12, 2015 incident from three cameras at the facility was recorded over or deleted by CoreCivic employees.<sup>20</sup>

**2012-**Two wrongful death lawsuits filed by the families of Clifford Medina and Bronson Nunuha, two incarcerated individuals transplanted from Hawai'i to Saguaro Correctional Center. The lawsuits were filed against both CoreCivic and the State of Hawai'i. The complaints alleged that CoreCivic's failure to control gang violence and adequately staff the prison, as well as Hawai'i's failure to provide oversight, contributed to the deaths.<sup>21</sup>

**2011-** Hawaii's then-governor Neil Abercrombie brought back 423 incarcerated people from Arizona prisons run by CCA/CoreCivic, in response to over a dozen individuals filing lawsuits regarding brutal treatment in CCA prisons.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2022/jan/1/montana-renews-corecivic-contract-major-water-and-sewage-problems-persist/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/hawaii-inmate-alleges-rape-retaliation-at-saguaro-prison-arizona-11393143>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2015/08/death-of-hawaii-inmate-in-arizona-prison-is-ruled-a-homicide/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2018/jan/8/lawsuit-claims-corecivic-allowed-corruption-and-gangs-flourish-oklahoma-prison/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/family-second-hawaii-prisoner-murdered-mainland-prison-files-suit-against-state>

“Notably, while Hawaii prisoners Clifford and Bronson were killed at the CCA-run Saguaro prison in Arizona in 2010, no state prisoners were murdered in DPS-operated facilities in Hawaii during that same year.”

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2010/12/16/hawaii-news/abercrombie-pledges-isle-inmates-return/>

**2011-** An incarcerated individual from Hawai'i alleges that an officer employed by CoreCivic sexually assaulted him in his cell in 2009. The officer, Richard Ketland, was sentenced to probation after being charged with unlawful sexual contact.<sup>23</sup>

**July 30, 2010** - 30 incarcerated individuals from Saguaro's high security unit are involved in a scuffle over an Xbox owned by one individual. When prison staff members intervened to stop, 13 incarcerated individuals beat up the facility's gang intelligence officer. The prison employee suffered a broken nose, broken cheekbones, and eye socket damage. Clayton Frank, then-Director of Public Safety Hawaii, said gang involvement and injury of a staff member have led to fears the violence could bleed into the general prison population.<sup>24</sup>

**June 8, 2010** – Clifford Medina, a 23-year-old individual from Hawai'i is murdered in his cell at CCA's Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona. His roommate strangled him.

**February 18, 2010** - Bronson Nunuha, a 26-year-old individual from Hawai'i, is fatally stabbed in his cell at CCA's Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona. Bronson was scheduled to be released in October 2010.

**November 2009** - The Eloy Police Dept. is investigating allegations that a CCA employee sexually assaulted an incarcerated individual at CCA-Saguaro.<sup>25</sup>

**August 25, 2009** - The New York Times publishes a story about the epidemic of sexual assaults at CCA's Otter Creek Facility in Kentucky. Hawai'i investigators found that at least five corrections officials at the prison, including a chaplain, had been charged with having sex with incarcerated individuals in the last three years, and four were convicted.<sup>26</sup>

**2009-** The family of incarcerated individual Ronnie Lonoaea, from Hawai'i, filed suit for harms that Ronnie suffered after being transferred to Tallahatchie County Correctional Facility, operated by CCA/CoreCivic. Lonoaea suffered brain damage after other incarcerated individuals beat him when a guard opened 20 cell doors "for reasons which are not clearly understood."<sup>27</sup>

**June 2007** - CCA opens 1896 bed Saguaro Prison in Eloy, Arizona, solely to house Hawai'i prisoners.

**December 31, 2005** - Sarah Ah Mau, a 43-year-old incarcerated individual from Hawai'i dies at CCA's Otter Creek Facility in Kentucky. Her family alleges that Sarah failed to receive adequate medical care. After Ah Mau died, Hawai'i prison officials sent a team to assess the medical

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/hawaii-inmate-alleges-rape-retaliation-at-saguaro-prison-arizona-11393143>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2010/sep/15/news-in-brief/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/hawaii-inmate-alleges-rape-retaliation-at-saguaro-prison-arizona-11393143>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/26/us/26kentucky.html>

<sup>27</sup> 665 F. Supp. 2d 677 (N.D. Miss. 2009)

treatment being given to incarcerated individual at Otter Creek. They never publicly released the results of that inquiry.<sup>28</sup>

**July 17, 2005** - Cell doors in Mississippi's SHIP unit "accidentally" opened around 2:45am, freeing inmates. Ronnie J. Lonoaea, 32, of Hawai'i was severely beaten in his cell before guards released tear gas and restored order about 90 minutes (about 3 hours) later. Scott Lee of Hawai'i also suffered a broken jaw in the incident. A CCA investigation concluded that cell doors likely opened because a corrections sergeant hit the wrong control button.

**February 2005** – GRW's Brush Warden in Colorado resigns in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations involving guards and eight incarcerated individuals, including two Hawai'i women. In September of 2005, Hawai'i moves 80 women from Brush to CCA's Otter Creek Correctional Center in Wheelwright, KY.<sup>29</sup> Colorado investigators discover seven Brush employees had arrest records or felony convictions; GRW admits background checks were not done.

**November 2004** - According to Hawai'i Contract monitor reports, in the first six months after Hawai'i inmates arrived in Mississippi, several employees were fired for smuggling cigarettes and having inappropriate relationships with incarcerated people. Hawai'i prison monitors also warned CCA the prison failed to meet National Commission on Correctional Health Care Standards because a doctor was onsite only eight hours a week to care for almost 1000 incarcerated people. Monitors also warned dental services were insufficient because a dentist was available only eight hours a week.<sup>30</sup>

**May 14, 2004** – Hundreds of incarcerated individuals riot for several hours at the Diamondback facility in Arizona; Hawai'i inmates are not involved. An investigation by Arizona officials finds inadequate staffing.<sup>31</sup>

**2004** - Male individuals from Hawai'i are transferred to CCA's Tallahatchie prison in Mississippi. Hawai'i contract monitors described the staff as young and inexperienced. Most had never worked in a prison before. CCA requires five weeks of training, compared with eight weeks for correctional officers in Hawai'i.<sup>32</sup>

**June 20, 2003** - A riot by incarcerated individuals from Hawai'i at CCA's Diamondback prompts an investigation and results in a three-week lockdown of 119 inmates.

**June 2003** – CCA's Diamondback officials suspect smuggling of crystal methamphetamine by female guards "in love" with incarcerated individuals from Hawai'i. Six are fired for "inappropriate relationships."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2008/Jan/02/ln/hawaii801020371.html>

<sup>29</sup> <https://honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Oct/03/ln/FP510030312.html>

<sup>30</sup> <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Oct/03/ln/FP510030313.html>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/2004/07/08/report-says-riot-lasting-for-hours/61982912007/>

<sup>32</sup> <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Oct/03/ln/FP510030313.html>

<sup>33</sup> <https://honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Oct/03/ln/FP510030312.html>

**June 2003** - Monitors urge removal of women from an Oklahoma prison run by CoreCivic because required programs are not being provided. More than a year after monitors urged transfer, in August of 2004, incarcerated women in Oklahoma are moved to GRW's Corporation's Brush Correctional Facility in Colorado.<sup>34</sup>

**June 2001** - According to the Hawai'i monitor's report, Florence was failing to conduct random urinalysis of incarcerated individuals, which would indicate the scope of drug smuggling into the facility. A testing program was required under the CCA contract with Hawai'i but was not being conducted. Florence official also admitted that the prison medical unit is "grossly understaffed."

**April 30, 2001** - Hawai'i prison monitors report lax security, widespread drug use, gang activity, and failure to provide required educational and rehabilitation programs at CCA's Florence facility. The warden is replaced and suspected gang members are sent to other prisons.

**April 16, 2001** - Iulani Amani, 23, of Hawai'i dies of a drug induced heart attack after packets of crystal methamphetamine burst in his stomach, prompting a management review of CCA's Florence facility.

**September 12, 2000** - Three guards are injured when 20 incarcerated individuals from Hawai'i at CCA's Florence Correctional Center smash windows, computers, TVs, and food carts in the so-called Rice Riot to protest the way rice is cooked.

**Nov. 2000** - Three Hawai'i women file lawsuits alleging sexual assaults by Oklahoma prison staff while incarcerated, the complaints are later settled for an undisclosed sum.<sup>35</sup>

**August 1999** - Fires set during a two-hour melee between CCA's Diamondback, OK, guards and 25 incarcerated individuals from Hawai'i cause \$200,000 in damage. Five guards and four inmates are hurt.

**June 1999** - Two dozen incarcerated individuals from Hawai'i and Indiana fight at CCA's Diamondback Correctional Facility in Watonga, Oklahoma.

**July- Oct. 1998** - **Hawai'i sends two groups of 300 incarcerated individuals each to private prisons in Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Minnesota run by Corrections Corporation of America (CCA).** Hawai'i now has 1,2000 incarcerated people on the Mainland at a cost of \$20 million per year.

**August 1998** - Hawai'i transfers female individuals to Central Oklahoma Correctional Facility because of sanitation problems and lack of programs at Crystal City.

**July 1998** - A **U.S. Department of Justice Investigation** finds conditions at the Dickens facility amount to "cruel and unusual punishment."

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<sup>34</sup> 34

<sup>35</sup> <https://honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Oct/03/ln/FP510030312.html>

**February 1998** - Three incarcerated individuals from Hawai‘i at Newton County Correctional Center in Texas kidnap and assault a corrections officer during an escape attempt. In March, the Newton facility is cited by the Texas Jail Standards Commission for violating minimum prison standards due to overcrowding.

**January 1998** -Newton's warden is fired after a disturbance in which incarcerated individuals from Hawai‘i set fire to the prison commissary after being tear gassed.

**December 1997** – Incarcerated individuals from Hawai‘i take control of a portion of Newton prison and release 300 people, resulting in a riot that causes \$300,00 in fire damage.

**August 1997** - Mathew Treu, an incarcerated individual from Hawai‘i, escapes from Newton but is quickly recaptured.

**May 27, 1997** - Hawai‘i sends another 300 people to Texas, including the first 64 female prisoners to Crystal City Correctional Center.

**May 9, 1997** – An incarcerated person from Montana is killed, and others injured when 100 incarcerated people from Montana and Hawai‘i brawl at Newton County prison. Nightly protests, fires, and property damage follow, with a U.S. Department of Justice report later blaming guards for inadequate response.

**August 1996** – Incarcerated people from Hawai‘i and Montana protest food portions, low wages, and other issues at Dickens; guards fire weapons, injuring a Montanan. The Warden is dismissed, and a U.S. Department of Justice investigation finds guards were poorly trained.<sup>36</sup> In 1998, a **U.S. Department of Justice Investigation** finds conditions at the Dickens facility amount to "cruel and unusual punishment.

**December 1995** - Citing cost savings, Hawai‘i sends 300 people to the Dickens and Newton County correctional centers in Texas, both operated by the Bobby Ross Group.

## **APPENDIX B: Lawsuits and Costly Punishments tied to CoreCivic**

**2024-** CoreCivic staff filed a class action lawsuit for unpaid overtime.<sup>37</sup>

**January 24, 2023-** Florida’s Citrus County Board of County Commissioners voted to deduct \$116,250 from its December 2022 bill for CoreCivic, as a fine against CoreCivic for failing to meet its staffing requirements during the month.<sup>38</sup> CoreCivic had been subject to heightened scrutiny from the county after settling for \$425,000 with the mother of a developmentally disabled teen who filed suit alleging CoreCivic allowed her son to be raped by another incarcerated person (see below). CoreCivic had previously been subject to fines because of its

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<sup>36</sup> See, for example, a 1997 DOJ report on the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/1997-cripa-report>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.classaction.org/corecivic-correctional-officers-lawsuit>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2023/mar/9/corecivic-still-accruing-fines-fort-short-staffing-florida-jail-where-developmentally-disabled-teen-was-raped/>

Citrus County Detention Facility, facing fines of \$2,500 for every day the jail was understaffed after the suicide of Lisa Ann Trombley, 48, on October 17, 2021, and the death the following November 2 of Valerie Bogle, 63 in CCDF.

**2023-** Lawsuit was brought against CoreCivic by a prison guard, alleging that she was unconstitutionally searched at CoreCivic's Wheeler Correctional Facility in Georgia.<sup>39</sup>

**2023-** Lawsuit filed by the estate of a 23-year-old asylum seeker who was held by CoreCivic in New Mexico in the Torrance County Detention Facility. The complaint notes systemic failures in the mental health care system resulted in a fatal suicide attempt. These failures included repeated postponements of the individual's deportation date, with little to no warning, and a failure by staff to monitor the inmate despite clear signs of extreme distress.<sup>40</sup>

**August 12, 2022-** Workers unionize and strike at CoreCivic's Central Arizona Florence Correctional Complex.<sup>41</sup>

**August 2022-** CoreCivic settles with the mother of Terry Childress, who dies in CCA's Trousdale Turner Correctional Center after his cellmate assaulted him.<sup>42</sup>

**2022-** Suit brought against CoreCivic on behalf of Joshua Williams, Christeris Allen, and Keith Brown. Joshua Williams had been visibly infected and his family had written to CoreCivic staff requesting assistance, but his illness was ignored. Williams passed away from a fentanyl overdose, believed to be an attempt at pain relief for his untreated infection. Christeris Allen also died from a fentanyl overdose, and his family alleged that Allen's death was due in part to a failure by CoreCivic guards to conduct mandatory head counts and inmate cell checks. Keith Brown developed terminal cancer while incarcerated at a CoreCivic facility, and alleges that medical professionals at the facility repeatedly ignored or failed to evaluate his cancer until it had become terminal.<sup>43</sup>

**August 23, 2020-** Addison Smith committed suicide, four days after being raped by another incarcerated person at CoreCivic's South Central Correction Center in Clifton, Tennessee. A lawsuit filed by Smith's family alleges that CoreCivic staff failed to provide mental health services after Addison was sexually assaulted, and that CoreCivic staff fabricated records to make it appear like these services were provided. After being confronted by CoreCivic's internal investigators, the staff member was allowed to resign.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Curtis v. Corecivic, Inc.*, CV 321-015 (S.D. Ga. Sep. 16, 2021)

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.krqe.com/news/new-mexico/torrance-county-detention-facility-faces-wrongful-death-lawsuit/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona/2022/08/15/private-prison-maintenance-workers-strike-over-wages-safety-concerns/10333152002/>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/2022/08/15/corecivic-settle-lawsuit-after-lawyer-ordered-stop-tweeting/10328441002/>

<sup>43</sup>

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/crime/2022/08/18/lawsuit-prison-company-corecivic-left-inmates-die-tennessee/10228095002/&ved=2ahUKewjz-OqSiN-IAxWGKEQIHd3tDR0QFnoECBYQAQ&usq=AOvVaw1\\_Tg2kngdx1nkvQOakvMI](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/crime/2022/08/18/lawsuit-prison-company-corecivic-left-inmates-die-tennessee/10228095002/&ved=2ahUKewjz-OqSiN-IAxWGKEQIHd3tDR0QFnoECBYQAQ&usq=AOvVaw1_Tg2kngdx1nkvQOakvMI)

<sup>44</sup> *Smith v. CoreCivic, Inc.*, 3:20-cv-00563 (M.D. Tenn. Dec. 12, 2022)

**May 9, 2020-** Five incarcerated people file suit, alleging that staff at CoreCivic's Central Arizona Florence Correctional Complex failed to implement basic social distancing and hygiene measures in violation their Eighth and Fifth Amendment rights during the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>45</sup>

**June 10, 2019-** The Human Rights Defense Center and No Exceptions Prison Collective reported that from 2014 through June 2019, there were twice as many murders in the four Tennessee prisons operated by CoreCivic (formerly Corrections Corporation of America) than in the 10 prisons run by the Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC). Also, the homicide rate in CoreCivic facilities was over four times higher than the rate for TDOC prisons. This was despite the fact that during that time period, TDOC facilities held, on average, 70% of the state's prison population – including incarcerated individuals with higher security levels than in CoreCivic prisons.

**January 2019-**CoreCivic settles for \$425,000 after a lawsuit alleged that CoreCivic guards allowed a developmentally disabled teen to be raped by other incarcerated people. The complaint in *Butzer v CoreCivic* states that “despite having the knowledge that [the boy] was mentally disabled and highly vulnerable to sexual assault, [the boy] was placed in an adult jail facility where other inmates were provided the opportunity to bully [him].”<sup>46</sup>

**September 2018-**Sayre, Oklahoma obtained a \$975,000 settlement from CoreCivic after a lawsuit alleged that CoreCivic had failed to pay the town \$904,000 in mandatory fees.<sup>47</sup>

**June 27, 2018-** Attorney Kathleen Bliss filed suit against CoreCivic, alleging CoreCivic recorded privileged conversations with her clients at Nevada Southern Detention Center.<sup>48</sup>

**March 26, 2018-** Lawsuit filed against CoreCivic by the widow of Earl Wayne Johnson, alleging that Johnson was severely beaten and subsequently denied adequate medical care while housed at Hardeman County Correctional Center, operated by CoreCivic.<sup>49</sup>

**February 22, 2018-**Class action filed on behalf of incarcerated people held in CoreCivic facilities, alleging that that civil immigration detainees had been forced to work for 1-2 dollars a day or no wages under threats including solitary confinement and denial of basic services.<sup>50</sup>

**2018-** A federal lawsuit was filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center and Project South regarding CoreCivic's operation of the Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin, Georgia. The

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<sup>45</sup> *Lucero-Gonzalez v. Kline*, 464 F. Supp. 3d 1078 (D. Ariz. 2020)

<sup>46</sup>

[Butzer v. Corecivic, Inc 5:2017cv00360](#)

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2019/mar/5/corecivic-bilked-rural-oklahoma-town-forced-pay-back-money-lawsuit/>

<sup>48</sup> *Bliss v. CoreCivic, Inc.*, 580 F. Supp. 3d 924

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.jacksonsun.com/story/news/local/2019/07/16/jail-death-lawsuit-corecivic-fights-keep-documents-private/1660907001/#:~:text=Carolyn%20filed%20her%20complaint%20against,he%20received%20inadequate%20medical%20care.>

<sup>50</sup> *Gonzalez v. CoreCivic* 1:18-cv-00169

complaint alleged that CoreCivic engaged in systematic deprivation of basic necessities to induce incarcerated individuals to do labor, violating anti-trafficking law and resulting in unjust enrichment. The lawsuit was settled in 2023.<sup>51</sup>

**2018-** Lawsuit filed against CoreCivic, alleging prison officials allowed corruption and gangs at the Cimarron Correctional Facility in Oklahoma. The lawsuit alleged that an incarcerated person was maced by guards as he bled to death.<sup>52</sup>

**2018-**Three ongoing lawsuits, including a class action lawsuit, against CoreCivic raised issues under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. The lawsuits alleged that diabetic incarcerated individuals at CoreCivic's Trousdale Turner Correctional Center in Tennessee were denied access to care for their condition.<sup>53</sup>

**June and July 2017-**Lawsuits alleged that CoreCivic officials ignored a scabies outbreak at CoreCivic's Metro-Davidson County Detention Facility in Tennessee. The outbreak affected 89 incarcerated people, at least 17 jail staff, and 16 courthouse workers and attorneys.<sup>54</sup>

**February 2017-** A federal jury found that CoreCivic had violated incarcerated individuals' Eighth Amendments rights to be free from cruel and unusual punishment by being deliberately indifferent to the serious risk posed by the company's long-standing practice of understaffing the Idaho Correctional Center.<sup>55</sup>

**January 2017-** Florida Rep David Richardson found that Florida state payments to CoreCivic had led to at least \$16 million in overcharges from 2010 to 2017.<sup>56</sup>

**August 2014-** Countess Clemons, represented by Human Rights Defense Center, settled with CCA for \$690,000 after the death of her newborn child while she was incarcerated at CCA's Silverdale facility. Clemons alleged that CCA staff failed to provide timely medical care.<sup>57</sup>

**July 2014-**The estate of Larry Adams settled with CCA for \$70,000. Larry Adams, held at CCA's Hardeman facility, died in May of 2007 after he contracted hepatitis B. Adams was treated by CCA medical staff improperly, and was treated with medication that was inappropriate given his pre-existing liver condition.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> <https://www.splcenter.org/presscenter/settlement-forced-labor-case-against-private-prison-company-operating-immigration>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2018/jan/8/lawsuit-claims-corecivic-allowed-corruption-and-gangs-flourish-oklahoma-prison/>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2018/08/07/corecivic-diabetic-inmates-denied-insulin-trousdale-turner/925297002/>

<sup>54</sup> *Snead v. CoreCivic*, U.S.D.C. (M.D. Tenn.), Case No. 3:17-cv-00949 and *Doe v. CoreCivic*, U.S.D.C. (M.D. Tenn.), Case No. 3:17-cv-00958.

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/jury-prison-company-violated-rights-but-no-need-to-pay/277-414222365>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.tampabay.com/news/politics/stateroundup/legislators-audit-florida-paid-private-prison-operator-16-million-too-much/2309289/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2016/feb/29/pln-obtains-confidential-cca-litigation-records-tennessee/>

<sup>58</sup> See: *Williams v. Hardeman County Government*, Circuit Court of Hardeman County (TN), Case No. 08-02-0328. *Lit. Medical*.

**May 2014-** Donna Johnson settled with CCA after filing suit regarding her treatment while incarcerated at CCA's Silverdale facility. Her allegations include that guards hit her "directly and repeatedly in her genitalia, causing her internal injuries" and that she "suffered a number of lacerations and abrasions to her body and had a number of her teeth knocked out, requiring oral surgery."<sup>59</sup>

**2014-** The U.S. Department of Labor found that CCA paid 30-40% less to its workers than required under the rules for federal contractors at its California City Correctional Center. DOL found that the federal prison subcontractor underpaid 362 employees and was accused of failing to make required payments to retirement and insurance accounts, and of inaccurately recording hours worked.<sup>60</sup>

**November 2013-** CCA settled for \$260,000 after 25 shift supervisors claimed they were denied overtime and were required to work extra hours without compensation.<sup>61</sup>

**2013-** Incarcerated individual Eric D. Smith settled a lawsuit with CCA in 2013. Smith alleged that a counselor had publicly called him a member of the Aryan Nation, and a guard later had allowed other prisoners into his cell to assault him.<sup>62</sup>

**2013-** CoreCivic held in contempt of court after violating a 2011 settlement agreement by falsifying records to misrepresent the number of guards on duty. The original lawsuit, settled in 2011, alleged that understaffing of CoreCivic's Idaho Correctional Center led to a violent atmosphere (leading the facility to be nicknamed "Gladiator School"). A 2008 study by Idaho's Department of Corrections found that the CoreCivic facility had "four times more prisoner-on-prisoner assaults than Idaho's other seven publicly-operated prisons combined."<sup>63</sup>

**May 2012-** A riot at a federal prison operated by CoreCivic in Natchez, Mississippi resulted in the death of a guard and injuries to approximately 20 incarcerated individuals and prison staff.<sup>64</sup>

**December 2010-** The family of incarcerated person Gerald Townsend settled with CCA for \$30,000. Townsend was fatally beaten in a CCA facility segregation cell by his cellmate, who had previously threatened former cellmates. Former CCA Captain Patrick Perry, who was on duty the night of Townsend's death, testified that the emergency call buttons in most of the segregation cells were nonfunctional.<sup>65</sup>

**October 1, 2009-** CCA entered into a consent decree with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, agreeing to a \$1.3 million settlement regarding allegations of retaliation and sexual assault at Crowley County Correctional Facility in Colorado.

**August 2009 -**The U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas unsealed a \$7 million settlement agreement in a class-action wage and hour lawsuit against CCA. The suit, brought under the Fair

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<sup>59</sup> See: *Johnson v. Wichita County*, Texas Sheriff's Office, U.S.D.C. (E.D. Tenn.), Case No. 1:12-cv-00394. *Lit*

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.cbsnews.com/losangeles/news/private-prison-company-pays-8m-in-back-wages/>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/599114/prison-company-pays-260k-in-lawsuit-settlement/>

<sup>62</sup> *Smith v. CCA*, U.S.D.C. (E.D. Tenn.), Case No. 1:11-cv-00121.

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.aclu.org/news/smart-justice/cca-it-again-held-contempt-understaffing-prison-and-lying>

<sup>64</sup> <https://oig.justice.gov/press/2016/2016-12-20.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> See: *Townsend v. CCA*, U.S.D.C. (M.D. Tenn.), Case No. 3:08-cv-00697.

Labor Standards Act, alleged that CCA had required some employees to perform work duties “without compensating them for all such hours worked.” Specifically, the company was accused of not paying correctional officers and other employees for pre- and post-shift work that included roll calls, obtaining weapons and equipment, attending meetings and job assignment briefings, and completing paperwork.<sup>66</sup>

**February 2008-** David Plunk settled with CCA for \$60,000 after alleging that CCA’s delay in providing medical treatment “lessened the probability that treatment would be as successful as it had been previously, and decreased the Plaintiff’s life expectancy and quality of life.”<sup>67</sup>

**2007-**Gary Dewayne Thompson filed a \$30 million lawsuit against CCA, alleging that guards at Silverdale Detention Facility in Tennessee compelled him to act as a “gladiator” towards another incarcerated individual, and punished him when he reported the incident. His case was settled for \$35,000.<sup>68</sup>

**2007-** CCA settled discriminatory hiring claims for \$438,000 regarding its Central Arizona Detention Center in Florence after the U.S. Department of Labor found that CCA disproportionately rejected non-Hispanic job applicants.<sup>69</sup>

**2002-** CCA settled a gender discrimination suit, paying \$152,000 in back wages to 96 women after the U.S. Department of Labor found that female applicants were being rejected due to gender at CCA’s facility in Sayre, Oklahoma.<sup>70</sup>

**2001-** A federal lawsuit was filed regarding gang violence at the Florence Correctional Center, run by CoreCivic/CCA, specifically that the prison had become run by gangs. Ted Sakai, then director of Hawaii’s Department of Public Safety, wrote an urgent letter to Correctional Corp., alerting officials that the Florence Correctional Center "has been taken over" by the "USO family."

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<sup>66</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/in-the-news/2009/pln-wins-motion-to-unseal-settlement-in-cca-wagehour-class-action-suit/>

<sup>67</sup> See: *Plunk v. CCA*, U.S.D.C. (W.D. Tenn.), Case No. 1:07-cv-01057-JDT-sta.

<sup>68</sup> *Thompson v. Hamilton County*, U.S.D.C. (E.D. Tenn.), Case No. 1:07-cv-00109. *Lit.*

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2007/sep/15/cca-pays-438626-for-discriminatory-hiring-practices-in-arizona/>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.oklahoman.com/article/2805216>

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:50:39 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
laurel brier	Testifying for Kauai Women's Caucus	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The banishment from homeland, family, and community is no way to rehabilitate people and make it more possible for them to return to the community and lead good lives. Take this step to do the right thing. For profit prisons are not motivated to rehabilitate. Strong Support for HCR153 as a step in the right direction and more reflective of our values in Hawai'i

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 4:32:45 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Luanna Peterson	Testifying for Reimagining Public Safety	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Luanna Peterson, and I live in Honolulu. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HCR153.

How can we expect to create truly safe communities when our response to harm is to inflict more harm? How can we model what a healthy, just society looks like when we choose exile over rehabilitation, when we separate people from their families, their language, their culture, and their support systems?

Sending people thousands of miles away to for-profit prisons—where oversight is minimal and abuse is well-documented—does not build safety. It erodes it. It breaks down the very community ties that are essential for healing, accountability, and successful re-entry.

If we want a healthier, safer Hawai‘i, we must stop investing in the systems that profit from punishment and disconnection. We must bring our people home and begin building the kind of justice system that reflects our values: restoration, community, and dignity.

It is inhumane and unjust that Hawai‘i continues to send nearly 1,000 of our people to private, for-profit prisons on the continent—thousands of miles away from their homes, their ‘ohana, and their communities. The practice of banishing incarcerated individuals to Saguario Correctional Center in Arizona—operated by CoreCivic—is a failure of our responsibility to care for our people, even in times of accountability and rehabilitation.

CoreCivic has a deeply troubling record. From the documented incidents of violence, murders, and deaths, to allegations of unsafe drinking water and drug smuggling, the harms are ongoing and severe. There is virtually no meaningful oversight from either CoreCivic or the state of Hawai‘i. This is unacceptable. We should not be outsourcing incarceration to corporations that view our people as profit, rather than as human beings.

A 2016 Department of Justice report confirmed what many have long known: private prisons are more dangerous than public ones. Private facilities have higher rates of violence, inadequate healthcare, and virtually no incentive to support rehabilitation. Their business model depends on keeping cells full—not on helping people return home, rebuild their lives, or heal.

Moreover, the separation from ‘ohana creates long-term emotional, spiritual, and social harm. Family visitation is nearly impossible due to distance and cost, cutting off essential support systems that are proven to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes.

Other states—including California, Nevada, Minnesota, and Washington—have already shown that it is possible to phase out private prison contracts and bring people back home without compromising public safety. These are examples of moral leadership that Hawai‘i must now follow.

Let me be clear: incarceration is not the same as exile. A prison sentence should not mean permanent disconnection from one’s homeland and family. We need to stop investing in systems that profit off of suffering, and instead invest in justice that is rooted in accountability, restoration, and community healing.

HCR153 is a step in the right direction. It’s time to bring our people home.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Luanna Peeterson

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 8:35:41 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brytni K-aloha	Testifying for Na 'Opio Waiwai	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*We are Nā 'Ōpio Waiwai and we are a youth lead Justice Impacted Council. We writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. We know this first hand from experience within our families. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. We appreciate your time.*

*Mahalo,*

*Nā 'Ōpio Waiwai*



24 W. Camelback Road,  
Suite A, Box 439,  
Phoenix, AZ 85013

April 10, 2025

Committee: Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs (PSM)  
Hearing Date/Time: Friday, April 11, 2025, at 3:05 PM  
Place: Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference  
Re: Testimony of Abolish Private Prisons in SUPPORT of HCR153/HR148

We have been asked by the ACLU of Hawai'i to submit comments on a bill under consideration that seeks to end Hawai'i's use of private prisons. We request that you consider these comments in your legislative deliberations:

We understand that the Hawai'i Legislature may consider whether to discontinue its practice of using private for-profit prisons to incarcerate some prisoners who are in the custody of the Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. At present, we understand that the HDOCR contracts with the private prison corporation, CoreCivic, to house more than 900 male prisoners daily in CoreCivic's Saguaro Correctional Center (SCC) in Eloy, Arizona.

Abolish Private Prisons is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charity and public interest law firm based in Phoenix, Arizona. Our name states our primary mission. We believe incarceration and detention are core government functions that should never be delegated to the private sector; and, that when such functions are so delegated, incarcerated people get treated as commodities, or units of profit to corporations whose first priority will always be corporate profits.

Over the last several years, we have communicated with several Hawai'ians who are, or were incarcerated in the SCC by HDOCR. Generally, the concern has been inadequate medical care.

**We urge Hawai'i** to discontinue its use of private prisons and any private jails and detention centers it may use. We urge Hawaii to join the growing number of states that have never used private prisons or have discontinued such use, some of which have enacted laws that ban the use and presence of private prisons and jails in their states. We note for you that the American Bar Association, which concerns itself with the quality of America's systems of justice, adopted resolutions in 2021 and 2024 that call for abolition of all private prisons, jails and detention facilities, and call for divestment of all lawyers' and judges' retirement pension funds from CoreCivic and GEO Group, the two largest and publicly-traded private prison corporations.

Between 2021 and 2024, the USDOJ/Federal Bureau of Prisons ended its use of private prisons throughout the United States. In very recent years, California, Washington, Nevada and New Jersey terminated their use of private prisons and enacted laws banning the industry. More states will follow these examples.

[www.abolishprivateprisons.org](http://www.abolishprivateprisons.org)

We urge Hawai'i to begin its own transition and terminate its contracts and usage of private prisons for at least these reasons:

### **Policy**

The movement to end the use of private prisons has garnered support from a diverse set of organizations on policy grounds. The American Bar Association has passed resolutions opposing private prisons, citing their failure to maintain safety and security, as well as their tendency to cut staff and programs to maximize profits. Similarly, the NAACP has called for the abolition of private prisons, highlighting concerns about the industry's exploitation of incarcerated individuals for financial gain and its undermining of constitutional protections. Additionally, the Japanese American Citizens League has drawn parallels between private prisons and internment camps, emphasizing the moral and historical implications of detaining individuals for profit.

### **Ethics and Morality**

The ethical and moral concerns surrounding private prisons have led numerous faith groups to oppose their use. For instance, organizations such as Faith in Action and Network Lobby have advocated against private incarceration on religious grounds, emphasizing the inherent dignity of every individual and the moral imperative to treat incarcerated persons with respect and compassion. Furthermore, prominent pension funds have taken action by divesting from private prison corporations. Notably, the New York City Pension Funds completed a significant divestment, selling approximately \$48 million of stock and bonds from private prison companies, citing concerns about human rights abuses and financial risks associated with these investments.

### **Constitutional concerns**

Private incarceration raises serious constitutional issues, particularly concerning the non-delegation doctrine, due process protections, and the Thirteenth Amendment's prohibition of slavery. Delegating the inherently governmental function of incarceration to private entities challenges the nondelegation doctrine, which prohibits the transfer of legislative or executive responsibilities to private parties. Moreover, the profit motive embedded in private prisons creates a financial bias that can compromise due process protections, as decisions affecting inmates' liberty may be influenced by corporate interests. Additionally, the commodification of incarcerated individuals for financial gain echoes the abhorrent practices of slavery, reducing human beings to mere assets in a profit-driven system.

### **Perverse Financial Incentives of Profits**

The profit-driven nature of private prisons is evident in their corporate strategies and financial disclosures. Companies like CoreCivic have highlighted in their SEC filings the potential for increased revenues through higher incarceration rates, effectively viewing recidivism as a business opportunity. This approach underscores a troubling incentive structure where the financial success of private prison companies is directly tied to the expansion of the incarcerated population, raising ethical questions about the prioritization of profit over rehabilitation and public safety.

## Conclusion

We would be happy to participate in further discussions about this topic. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Robert Craig

John Dacey

Attorneys at Law

602-737-0600

[robertcraig@abolishprivateprisons.org](mailto:robertcraig@abolishprivateprisons.org)

[johndacey@abolishprivateprisons.org](mailto: johndacey@abolishprivateprisons.org)

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 11:13:28 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristen Young	Testifying for Faith Action for Community Equity	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Kristen, and I live in Honolulu. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones.

Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning.

We need to bring people back to Hawai'i where they can heal, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.

Mahalo,  
Kristen Young  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:25:51 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:33:07 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nandita Sharma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HCR 153, which urges Hawai'i to systematically reduce the number of people sent to out-of-state private prisons. It is not only expensive but it is also truly unjust.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:34:25 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Kathy Shimata, and I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.

Mahalo,

Kathy Shimata

Honolulu. 96822

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:36:11 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mike Moran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please suport Mahalo

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:37:35 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Deborah Bond-Upson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*“Aloha Committee Members:*

I am Deborah Bond-Upson, a Kaneohe resident and public school advocate. I am writing to support HCR 153.

Sending Hawai‘i residents, who have been sentenced to prison, far from their homeland is cruel and unusual punishment and reduces the true opportunity for rehabilitation.

Added to the cruelty to families and prisoners of sending these people to a place far away in a different climate, is that the prison is "for-Profit" with a questionable record in rehabilitation.

We need to bring our people back, find ways to reduce imprisonment, and to increase prevention and rehabilitation efforts.

Mahalo for any help you can provide to improve this serious and dehumanizing process.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:44:11 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Janice A Takemoto-Gentile	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Janice Takemoto-Gentile and I live in Kaneohe. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawaii people thousands of miles away from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering is wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawaii, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 3:59:15 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle Bonk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Michelle Bonk, and I live in Kula. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo."*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 4:02:40 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marina Diaz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*“Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Marina Diaz and I live in Honolulu. I’m writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai’i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai’i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo.”*

Thank you,

Marina Diaz

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 4:26:43 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kayla Marie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 4:43:26 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha PSM Committee Members:

As a citizen concerned with justice and health, I write in strong support of HCR153.

It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Furthermore, we cannot expect to reduce recidivism and promote community reintegration if we are not keeping people close their own communities.

I am also concerned with the waste of taxpayer funds, especially in this current economic climate, on unnecessary and expensive imprisonment. Additionally, contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. Rather than promote public health, these private contractors increase health issues that echo into our broader communities.

We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

Makiki, HI

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 4:46:33 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Winternitz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Elizabeth Winternitz, and I live in Kula, Maui.

I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is just plain wrong to send Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is, frankly, immoral. HCR153 is an important step in doing the pono thing by bringing people home.

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Winternitz

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 5:07:29 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lewis Glenn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Lewis Glenn, and I live in Kailua Town. I'm writing in support of HCR153.*

*It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Also, it is wrong to contract with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can successfully re-enter society. This is effectively a warehousing operation, for profit. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning, including the deaths of several incarcerated individuals from Hawaii. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.*

*Mahalo for your consideration.*

Lewis Glenn

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 5:21:51 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christy Shaver	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Christy, and I live in Lahaina. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 5:43:52 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Maddux	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ano'ai kakou Committee Members:

My name is Michael Maddux, and I live in Hawi town.

I'm writing in support of HCR153. Prison for profit is an evil endeavor. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Me ka mahalo nui.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 5:47:57 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robert I Nehmad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of the Satte of Hawaii and support HCR153.

Please approve and implement HCR153

Mahalo

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 5:53:26 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dianne Deauna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senate Committee Members of Public Safety and Military Affairs:

I'm Dianne from Mānoa Valley. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of violence against inmates at the Saguaro facility and the lack of accountability from CoreCivic, who runs the prison, is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 6:27:29 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaylin Helepololei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Kaylin, and I live in Pearl City. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. I ask you to have empathy for those incarcerated and their families, who want to support them but are an ocean away. I ask you to consider the negative impact of continuing to displace the people of Hawai'i by sending them away from connection, community, and their home. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 6:52:36 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Rich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**[COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS](#)**

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair

Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Aloha Sen.Elefante,Sen, Wakai and members of the Committee,

My name is Linda Rich. I am a social worker, addictions treatment professional ,member of the WOMen's Corrections implementation Commission , and I am testifying in support of HCR153.

Inmates placed in prisons on the Continent are cut off from family connections that research shows provide incentive for participation in rehabilitation programs and support attitudinal and behavioral changes that reduce risk for recidivism. Placement so far from Hawaii places an additional burden on the family and is especially hard on children who are unable to see their incarcerated parent.

It is my hope that Hawaii will continue to develop avenues for diversion from incarceration for non-violent offenders and those with serious mental illness , and eliminate the need for inmates to be sent so far from home.

Mahalo,

Linda Rich



**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 7:11:58 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg Puppione	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Greg Puppione, and I live in Honolulu. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo.*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 8:27:40 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Colleen Rost-Banik	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Colleen Rost-Banik, I live in Honolulu, and I'm a Sociology Instructor at University of Hawaii, Manoa. I also facilitate a creative writing class at the Women's Community Correctional Center. I'm writing in support of HCR153.

It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i residents thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i so that they can more easily see and reconnect with their loved ones. HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.

Mahalo for your consideration.  
Colleen Rost-Banik, Ph.D.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 8:29:49 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brytni K-aloha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Brytni Kalei K-aloha, and I live in Ola 'a, Hawai'i I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo.*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 8:36:37 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Janian K Thurman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*“Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Jan, and I live in Waikiki. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo.*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 8:45:35 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha legislators,

Please support HCR 153, which urges Hawai'i to systematically reduce the number of people sent to out-of-state private prisons. We need to stop shipping people out of their communities to these corporate operations that have no incentive to rehabilitate anyone. When Nevada ended its private prison contracts, the number of people who died in prison dropped dramatically, and violence in state prisons did not increase.

mahalo,

Cory Harden, Hilo

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 8:50:50 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Richard S Velasquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please support HCR 153

brst to keep our prisoners here and stop feeding these out of state prisons

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 8:56:27 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Doug Klunder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Elefante and Committee Members,

My name is Doug Klunder, and I am a Kahalu'u resident, and I write in support of HCR153.

Throughout the country, decades of experience have now shown that our experiment with private, for-profit prisons has been a huge mistake. Conditions are far worse than in public prisons, and accountability is far less. While this is a nationwide problem, all of those problems are greatly magnified in Hawaii, since the private prisons we use are on the mainland, making accountability even harder.

The hardships on inmates are likewise magnified, as the distance makes maintenance of relationships with family, friends, and home support systems very difficult. And, of course, it is well documented that loss of those ties makes rehabilitation much harder, and increases the risks of recidivism.

We need to quit sending Hawaii residents across the ocean to serve sentences. HCR153 is a first step towards ending this practice, and I urge you to support it.

Thank you for your consideration.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 9:40:54 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debra M Javar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I fully SUPPORT hcr153 and humbly ask for your support. Please, we need to keep our prisoners in our state. Sending them out of state, separates them from their loved ones, their culture and their people. Sending them to private for profit prisons does not make sense. Prisons should be helping to rehabilitate them. It's only obvious that a for profit would want to keep you a prisoner there forever. These prisons are more dangerous with unhealthy conditions. PLEASE, return our prisoners back to Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Debra M Javar

Kona, Hawai'i

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Sally Lambert, and I live in Kona, Hawai'i. I'm writing in support of HCR153, which urges Hawai'i to systematically reduce the number of people sent to out-of-state prisons.

Hawaii has been contracting with private prison operators who profit from human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility in Arizona, where close to 1,000 people from Hawaii are held, is very concerning.

Studies have found that private prisons do not meaningfully increase savings for governments. Private prisons have been shown to have higher incarceration rates and longer sentences. Recidivism is costly for states but good business for private prison operators who have every incentive to keep people in prisons rather than restore them to their communities.

It is unethical to send Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. I support HCR153 as an important first step in improving our prison outcomes.

Mahalo.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 2:57:10 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patrick Uchigakiuchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Committee Members:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 153/HR148 that will bring our people from Hawaii back home from a distant and remote prison in Arizona. Unaffordable travel costs are imposed on family members, cutting off meaningful visitations and social support. Maintaining close relationships with family and loved ones is the most critical factor for people in prison in successfully completing a rehabilitation program and reconnecting with their communities when they are released. Further, Suguaro prison is an extremely dangerous and horrific environment, the extent to which has been clearly documented by our local media, ACLU of Hawaii, and stories from family members. To continue this inhumane treatment of our people and families is unconscionable and is harmful not only to the person in prison and to his family, but also harmful to our community and state. This is wrong and we need to implement the changes that HCR 153/HR148 will initiate.

Sincerely,

Patrick Uchigakiuchi

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 7:32:31 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chuck Taylor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 8:40:40 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nicole Gonzales	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Nicole Gonzales, and I live in Oceanview. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo."

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 8:55:57 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean Harmon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*“Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Sean Harmon, and I live in Kamuela. I’m writing in support of HCR153. Contracting with private prisons is immoral and unethical. Businesses operate for profits, not for the people’s interests which is why prisons should never be privatized. The incentives to increase incarceration times and to put innocent people behind bars is too great. This being the case, if the government supports private prisons, they are setting the conditions for crimes being committed by our elected representatives: ie cruel and unusual punishment and kidnapping. In addition, sending inmates to other States does not help the mental health of the inmates nor their loved ones. The sense of isolation detroys hope for a better future. Please be empathetic and try to imagine yourself in their situation and do the right thing.*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 9:35:26 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Noelle Lindenmann, and I live in Kailua-Kona. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.

Mahalo.

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 10:03:54 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Danielle Goren	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee Members:

My name is Danielle Goren and I live in Lahaina. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so they can re-enter society is abjectly unethical. CoreCivic's track record at the Saguaro facility is concerning. Bring Hawai'i people back to Hawai'i. HCR153 is an important step in doing so. Mahalo.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 10:07:41 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carla Allison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Carla Allison, and I live in Honolulu. I'm writing in **strong support of HCR153**. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.

**Please support HCR153.**

Thank you,  
Carla Allison

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 10:29:18 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stacia Ohira Over	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members:

I am writing this in strong support of this bill that will start to bring our inmates home. Not only are they thousands of miles away from home but they are in a place where they are almost unreachable by ohana. Ohana has been the most important part of not returning to prison. Their connections to ohana deeply control the success of their lives once they are released from prison. Once again only the rich will be afforded the luxury of in person visits that create a stronger sense of belonging. My concern is that we are not setting our inmates up for success by keeping them far away and very disconnected. I do understand that they prefer to be in another prison system where they have more options however, they are not thinking about the facts that when they get out they're feeling of disconnect will greatly determine whether they make it or not. I would like the best option of success for them as our tax dollars continue to go to paying people to take care of our families incarcerated. What little money that we are supposedly saving by sending them to these for profit prisons we end up using those savings because they are returning back to prison on violations. I would like to see more efforts being spent to prepare them to leave more ready to make it in life. Places like KASHBOX and other programs should be "beefed" up so that more of our inmates can go there or more programs in Halawa that will both mentally and physically prepare them for life after prison.

I researched the track record for the for profit prison that we are sending them to and it floors me to see how unsuccessful this place is. Furthermore there are other states that are sending their people back because of this so I am asking you to please support the return of our family members so that they can focus on staying grounded and connected to their ohana.

Mahalo-

Stacia Ohira Over

## Written Testimony in Support of HCR153

Aloha Committee Members:

My name is Kristel Whippy and I live in Palolo Valley. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.

The current approach to prison's being punitive seems to be mainly targeted at destabilizing those who are imprisoned. Even where their crimes are not severe the aim appears to be lifelong harm and punishment by the legal system albeit questionable that such actions are legal or constitutional. This targeted destabilization does not just affect the immediate individual, but ripples throughout their family and community. When families are destabilized children are often ripped from their homes and their communities in egregious situations. This continues to lead to destabilization throughout their lives and exposes them to further potential trauma of sexual assault and other abuse including a high risk of suicidal ideation or action. Governing bodies should be aimed at building communities and reducing harm. This is not achieving that. Prioritizing profits over people is no way to govern or prevent further harm and certainly will not rehabilitate anyone.

I also implore you to consider the various other destabilizing issues people deal with on a daily/ongoing basis. Housing and food insecurity are something that I personally experience and to add to that the stress of ongoing, targeted, injustice during and after incarceration it is unsurprising that these issues are only being exacerbated. You cannot address societal ills by investing in destabilization and dehumanizing conditions. A person who has properly been convicted of a crime should not be sentenced to lifelong, targeted, harm, but be allowed to reintegrate into society throughout their incarceration (rehabilitation) and afterwards.

Governor Green has launched a report of the Climate Advisory Teams Policy Recommendations in January of 2025. A copy of the executive summary, fully document and a presentation video can be found here: <https://www.hawaiiclimateadvisoryteam.org/policy/>. These objectives are not attainable in a State that has ongoing policies that destabilize its population to the point of creating a housing, economic, and various other insurmountable crises. Unless the unjust incarceration issues are addressed now or soon the State and people of Hawai'i will suffer and be unable to deal with the looming climate crisis. Please choose people over profits and show your Aloha for Hawai'i.

Mahalo Nui,

Kristel Whippy

E: [kris25@hawaii.edu](mailto:kris25@hawaii.edu)

96816, Palolo Valley

2025 LLM Candidate at William S. Richardson School of Law

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 11:33:28 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Judith Cucco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Judith Cucco, and I live in Honolulu. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home. Mahalo.*

## HCR 153

### Requesting the DCR Reduce the number of inmates incarcerated in private, out-of-state correctional facilities.

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

‘Apelila 11, 2025 3:00 PM

‘Apelila 10, 2025

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HCR 153: Return Out-of-State Inmates

Welina me ke aloha iā ‘oukou e Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs. Aloha ‘oukou.

My name is Phyllis K Waiau and I am a lifelong resident of Papakōlea here on O‘ahu island. I’m testifying in **full support of HCR 153** requesting the DCR reduce the number of inmates incarcerated in private, out-of-state correctional facilities.

As an adult child of a former inmate, I know and understand the importance of the value of ‘ohana and our role in the healing process and as a crucial support system for our imprisoned men and women. Strong ties to community and cultural practices are also an important consideration when faced with the possible exile of Hawai‘i’s sons’ and daughter’s thousands of miles away from their homeland. This results in a significant detrimental impact on the inmate AND their ‘ohana. I was blessed that my father was incarcerated at O‘ahu Prison (1970-80s) and that our connection to him was not severed, that we were able to heal as an ‘ohana because we had constant and frequent contact with him all along the way. My story might have been very different had my father been sent to an unfamiliar place miles away from his healing circle.

In my youth, I understood that my dad did wrong and that he was learning how to be a better kanaka. That he would be back home when he was stronger, when he had learned more skills and had mastered his ability to guide his mana in a positive way, and that our visits each weekend to connect and share aloha was also a salve for his pain and regret in his actions.

I call upon each of us to re-imagine what public safety looks like in our communities and move away from incarceration, towards rehabilitation for all of us. Perhaps that kāhea is for another day.

This resolution affirms that “the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is requested to incrementally and systematically reduce the number of inmates incarcerated in private, out-of-state correctional facilities”.

**HCR 153** is a way to start on the path towards healing our inmates and our families which leads to healing our community at large. Together, we can.

Let’s bring our out-of-state inmates home to serve their time, to heal and to grow.

I appreciate this opportunity to show my strong support for HCR 153.

Mahalo for your careful consideration and aloha,

Phyllis K. Waiau  
Papakōlea, O‘ahu, Hawai‘i

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 12:51:03 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brigitte Leilani Axelrode	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Brigitte Axelrode, and I live in Honolulu. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people away from their 'āina and families. The use of privatized prisons that capitalize off of incarcerating vulnerable communities is also disgusting. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. HCR153 is one way we can keep people who care about Hawai'i in Hawai'i. Mahalo.*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 6:06:06 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

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

Comments:

I respectfully submit this written testimony in **strong support of HCR153**, which requests the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to incrementally and systematically reduce the number of individuals incarcerated in private, out-of-state correctional facilities.

For too long, our state has relied on for-profit prison companies such as CoreCivic to house incarcerated individuals—often hundreds or even thousands of miles from their families and communities. This practice undermines rehabilitation, erodes accountability, and places financial profit above human dignity and public safety.

HCR153 presents a clear and necessary opportunity to begin phasing out this harmful reliance. States across the country—including **Illinois, Minnesota, Nevada, California, and Washington**—have demonstrated that meaningful reform is possible. These states have taken action to eliminate their dependence on private prisons, prioritizing public oversight, transparency, and community-based rehabilitation efforts.

Out-of-state private facilities operate with minimal oversight, raising serious concerns about living conditions, healthcare access, and program quality. Incarcerated individuals are often separated from vital family and support networks, which research has shown to be essential for successful reintegration and reduced recidivism.

By supporting HCR153, we can begin the work of repatriating individuals held in these facilities and investing in more humane, restorative approaches here at home. This resolution does not call for immediate or disruptive changes—but rather a **measured, incremental transition** that centers the values of justice, rehabilitation, and responsible governance.

I urge the committee to advance HCR153 and support a future where our correctional system is rooted in dignity, transparency, and public accountability—not profit.

Thank you for your consideration.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 2:35:04 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leah Morse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Leah Morse and I live in Honolulu. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguaro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.*

*Thank you for your time and consideration,*

*Leah Morse*

**LATE**

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 4:51:47 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nikos Leverenz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, & PSM Committee:

I write in support of HCR 153, which requests the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to incrementally and systematically reduce the number of inmates incarcerated in private out-of-state correctional facilities.

The United States government is currently disappearing international students who've expressed political opinions, migrants with tattoos, and even citizens in out-of-state facilities, including those in other nations. This untoward relocation is a stark reminder that thousands of Hawai'i residents are now separated from their families and imprisoned in facilities that have [endangered their health](#) and [even their lives](#). The operation of these facilities have been conducted without routine public oversight, including assessments by the Coordinator of the Hawai'i Correctional Oversight Commission.

While those in Arizona prisons have been sentenced, unlike many federal arrestees in recent months, the physical separation from their loved ones exacerbates the emotional toll on family members. Incarceration of a parent is among [the adverse childhood experiences that have serious long-term impacts on a person's health and well-being](#), including behavioral health problems, chronic medical conditions, life expectancy, educational attainment, lifetime earnings, and criminal legal system involvement.

Policymakers should also look for ways to reduce the numbers of those in prison, including the authorization of parole for those who are elderly, infirm, or have served a substantial portion of their sentence, which some have labeled "compassionate release," and implementing a system of good time credits where prisoners are incentivized to be peaceable and to engage in available educational and vocational opportunities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/11/2025 9:21:49 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ireen Domingo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha Committee Members:*

*My name is Ireen Domingo, and I live in Ewa Beach, Hawaii. I'm writing in support of HCR153. It is unethical to continue sending Hawai'i people thousands of miles from home and away from their loved ones. Contracting with private prison operators who profit off of human suffering and have no interest in rehabilitating people so that they can re-enter society is also wrong. The track record of CoreCivic at the Saguro facility and across the country is very concerning. We need to bring people back to Hawai'i, and HCR153 is an important step in bringing people home.*

*Mahalo.*

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/11/2025 9:22:49 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Donna Sue Shepherd	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

VOTE YES ON HCR153 ALREADY!!

**HCR-153**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 2:41:54 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/11/2025 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Frank Schultz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this initiative.