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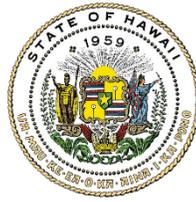
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OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

February 21, 2025

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H.B. No. 433, HD1: RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY

Chair Belatti, Vice-Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender **supports HB 433, HD1**. We strongly support any efforts to expand community-based support services for treatment, counseling, housing, employment, benefits assistance and other reentry programs for all incarcerated individuals. It is a common experience for incarcerated individuals to serve jail or prison time without a meaningful opportunity for self-improvement or options for successful reentry in the community. The limited programs that do exist are often at capacity and do not adequately address the needs of the greater incarcerated population.

The current community correctional centers have almost no programming for incarcerated individuals. For Public Defender clients, it is common for their incarceration to result in the loss of government assistance, housing, and employment. Upon release, the clients are in a worse situation than prior to their incarceration.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



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, 16th Floor
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 587-4160

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: House Bill 433, House Draft 1, Relating to Public Safety
Hearing: Monday, February 24, 2025; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 308

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

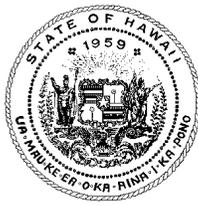
The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) **supports** House Bill 433, House Draft 1, Relating to Public Safety, which appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

The transition from incarceration back into society is one of the most challenging yet critical periods for individuals. Without access to comprehensive support during this phase, many face insurmountable barriers to securing employment, stable housing, education, and necessary mental health care. These unmet needs often lead to reoffending, perpetuating a costly and damaging cycle of incarceration that adversely affects individuals, families, and communities alike. Sustained funding for reentry services is essential to breaking this cycle and ensuring lasting change.

The DCR's vision is, "to transform Hawaii's unified correctional system, which has been historically perceived as a punitive model, into a rehabilitative, restorative, and reentry focused system, that reduces recidivism and promotes safer communities." This type of paradigm shift requires significant funding. Additionally, evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that well-funded reentry programs significantly reduce recidivism and enhance community safety. By addressing core needs—such as job training, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and housing assistance—reentry services equip individuals with the tools they need to rebuild their lives and avoid returning to the criminal justice system. Fewer people reoffending translates directly into safer neighborhoods and reduced financial burdens on correctional facilities.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION**
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalu Kalaima
a Ho'oponopono Ola*
1177 Alakea Street
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TOMMY JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin
Deputy Director
Administration

Pamela J. Sturz
Deputy Director
Correctional Institutions

Sanna Muñoz
Deputy Director
Rehabilitation Services
and
Programs

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 433, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY.

by
Tommy Johnson, Director
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Monday, February 24, 2025; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & via Videoconference

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

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) **supports the intent** of House Bill (HB) 433, House Draft (HD) 1, which seeks to appropriate unspecified amount of funding for fiscal year 2025 – 2026, and fiscal year 2026 – 2027 for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

DCR sincerely appreciates the legislature's interest in this matter, and thanks Chair Della Au Belatti, and the committee on Public Safety, for recommending the passage of this measure. DCR recommends the legislature supports the \$4 million included in the Governor's Executive Budget package to fund its innovative reentry initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **supporting the intent** of HB 433, HD 1.



HB433 HD1 Reentry to Community Services for Offenders
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Monday Feb 24, 2025 10:00 Room 308

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Strongly Supports HB433 HD1:

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

A comprehensive program that includes diversion to treatment and reentry to community services produces better outcomes and is more cost-effective.

HSAC understands this very well since we treat all these issues for those who have chronic to severe levels as well as new programs for mild to moderate conditions.

- **A chronic condition of substance abuse often has multiple conditions** such as co-occurring mental health issues and physical health conditions.
- There are **various levels of mild to chronic** forms of substance use disorders, mental health disorders and even criminality.

Comprehensive services can address the various levels of mild to moderate to chronic for **multiple reentry issues that can include specialized treatment for substance abuse and/or mental health disorders, harm reduction for lower use of substances, housing, case management, vocational training and employment, education, family integration, harm reduction, restorative practices and more.**

1. **For offenders with heavy use substance use** and either low or high functionality, **abstinent-based treatment is essential for what works according to research** from the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), the definitive body of science for levels of care. The more chronic substance abuse, especially for addiction, would be best to start at residential or if less severe, start at outpatient treatment. Treatments would also address criminality and include medications if needed.
 - a. If **residential**, start first and then move to housing.
 - i. Key to residential is to **have complex patient capability.**

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Monday, February 24, 2025

Room 308 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

10:00 AM

SUPPORT WITH COMMENT/SUGGESTION ON HB 433 - FUNDING DCR FOR REENTRY SERVICES

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai`i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 3,700 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars¹ and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation as of February 17, 2025. We are always mindful that 936 - 49.6% of Hawai`i's male prison population are serving their sentences abroad -- thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

Community Alliance on Prisons appreciates this opportunity to support funding the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services with the caveat that before any funding is released, DCR shall submit a reentry plan. The reentry plan must include the names and description of the community-based services to which individuals would be connected to ensure that each person is released with an

¹ DCR Weekly Population Report, February 17, 2025

<https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2025-02-17.pdf>

individual reentry plan in place that includes housing, employment training, educational opportunities, and healthcare to help people get their lives re-started.

Hawai`i's hard-working families want to see that there is a plan with a timeline for expending the \$4 million that was originally intended for this bill. Community Alliance on Prisons totally supports funding a REAL reentry system, which Hawai`i currently does not have. We have reentry programs and clean and sober houses, yet there is no coordinated reentry system to assess and provide appropriate services to our people who are coming home.

SUGGESTION:

Add language to Section 2, line 6 after 'community-based services.'
"Before any funding is released, DCR shall submit a Reentry Plan that includes the names and description of community-based services to which individuals would be connected, the number of individuals anticipated in each cohort, a timeline for expending the funds, and an evaluation after each two-year cycle so the Legislature can assess the efficacy of the newly created Reentry System that is shared with the Hawai`i Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) and posted on both the HCSOC and Legislative websites."

Mahalo nui for the chance to share our thoughts on creating a holistic reentry system that works together with other agencies and community-based organizations to help our people who may have lost their way, find a good pathway to bring them home with the assistance of a REAL REENTRY SYSTEM!

Mahalo nui!

Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i
KAWAIILOA

February 24, 2025

House Committee on Finance
Hearing Time: 10:00AM
Location: State Capitol Conference Room 308
Re: HB433 HD1, Relating to Public Safety

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i hui, we are writing in **strong support of HB433 HD1, relating to public safety**. This bill appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

Reentry services play a vital role in assisting individuals as they transition from incarceration to society. Studies have consistently shown that access to housing, employment, healthcare, and education significantly decreases the likelihood of reoffending. By addressing these core needs, reentry services equip individuals with the tools they need to rebuild their lives and avoid returning to the criminal justice systems.

The cost to house prisoners in Hawai'i is higher than the national average, totaling approximately \$238 per day. To mitigate this cost, Hawai'i sends a portion of its prisoners to mainland facilities, thus depriving them of their families and communities and severing their ties to home. By investing in reentry programs, the State ultimately stands to reduce the overall cost of imprisonment and simultaneously bolsters local communities. Providing structured support reduces the risk of individuals reentering the criminal justice system. Economic benefits help individuals secure employment, leading to greater economic self-sufficiency and reducing dependence on public assistance. Successful integration leads to lower crime rates and a higher quality of life. Reunification of families increases household stability, thereby benefiting children and loved ones affected by incarceration.

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

Please support HB433 HD1.

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



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair**

**Monday, February 24, 2025, at 10:00AM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference**

RE: HB433 HD1 Relating to Public Safety

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 433 House Draft 1 (HB433 HD1), which appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

HB433 HD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Business Services. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Sustained funding for offender reentry services is essential for public safety, as successful reintegration reduces recidivism and strengthens communities. The legislature recognizes that ongoing support for reentry programs is crucial to reducing incarceration rates and enhancing public safety. Jurisdictions like Pima County, Arizona, have shown success with programs that connect released offenders to treatment, housing, employment, and transportation. Access to mental health and substance abuse treatment, employment assistance, and temporary housing significantly impacts reintegration success.

This bill allocates funding to the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services in fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. These funds will connect offenders with critical community resources for a stable transition. The Chamber supports this proposal as a commitment to public safety, economic stability, and community well-being by ensuring formerly incarcerated individuals have access to essential resources for a successful reintegration.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass House Bill 433 House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-433-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:42:50 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

To: Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair of the House Committee on Finance
on Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair of the House Committee on Finance
House Committee on Finance
House Committee on Public Safety

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: February 23, 2025

RE: Upcoming Hearing for HB433
HD1
PUBLIC SAFETY
Community-based Services; Department of Appropriation (\$)

Measure Title: RELATING TO
Report Title: Reentry Services;
Corrections and Rehabilitation;

To All Concerned,

There are a variety of public benefits, job placement services, treatment programs, options for community-based case management, and housing programs throughout the state of Hawai'i. Obtaining a sort of conduit that can connect individuals scheduled to be released from the custody of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) to these services will be most advantageous for the community at large, and the individual(s) who will receive such services. I support House Bill (HB) 433 HD1 because it will afford individuals in the custody of the DCR with:

1. The support they need to secure critical reentry services,
2. The comfort in knowing that they do not have to traverse this important phase in their life alone,
3. The opportunity to adjust, positively and not haphazardly, as they are reintroduced to being responsible, making healthy decisions, and interacting appropriately with people in the community.

I think it would be helpful to identify the stage of incarceration that those in the custody of the DCR will be

1. Informed about the “connection” program that will aid in their reentry,
2. Afforded the opportunity to meet with the connection staff to establish when they are projected to be released, identify the needs they may have, and obtain an understanding of how the connection staff can specifically help them.
3. Allowed to follow-up with the connection staff to provide updates (i.e., should the circumstances of the person in the custody of the DCR change), confirm the services that will be needed, and establish when and where they will meet in the community to begin the process of securing services.

Lastly, considering the population that is being served and the challenges that may ensue (i.e., addressing prejudices/stereotypes/myths that need to be dispelled, etc.), I think it would be helpful to establish realistic expectations of the connection staff. The connection staff should not only be knowledgeable about public benefits, job placement services, treatment programs, options for community-based case management, and housing programs, etc. throughout the state of Hawai'i, they should also be able to:

1. Advocate for their customers/consumers, when necessary,
2. Network and/or establish partnerships with businesses/agencies, etc. as appropriate,
3. Educate these businesses/agencies when needed,
4. Problem-solve, if applicable, should obstacles arise, and
5. Understand how to work with the customers/consumers should the process become frustrating or elongated and progress is not occurring as quickly as anticipated.

I hope the items above are taken into consideration as this bill is reviewed and considered for passage. My name is Veronica Moore and I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony regarding HB433 HD1. Thank you to all who introduced this bill.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore

HB-433-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:01:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carolyn Eaton. I am a resident of Makiki and I strongly support this bill. The prerequisite of a reentry plan to be submitted by the Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation must be stipulated. Leadership of the Department must be required to show that an individual reentry plan is in place which names community-based services for any person reentering our community.

Mahalo for your hard work and your understanding that working together with non-governmental organizations is the wise choice for successful reentry. It is reintegration, the way forward for Hawai'i.

HB-433-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:27:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Tilley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. It is almost impossible to move ahead in the community without proper Id and paper work. I am appalled that it isn't already something the states does for innates returning to our communities

Sincerely Cathy Tilley