

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR



**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

**MARK PATTERSON**  
CHAIR

**CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON**  
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

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**HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)**

**TO:** The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**FROM:** Mark Patterson, Chair  
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

**SUBJECT:** House Bill 433, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, Relating to Public Safety  
Hearing: Friday, March 28, 2025; 10:02 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 211

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) **supports** House Bill 433, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, Relating to Public Safety, which requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to submit an annual report to the Legislature. 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](mailto:christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO HOUSE BILL 433 HD 1 SD 1**  
**RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY**

Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Hawai'i State Capitol

March 28, 2025

10:02AM

Room 211

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Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB433 HD 1 SD 1 which requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to submit an annual report to the Legislature and appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

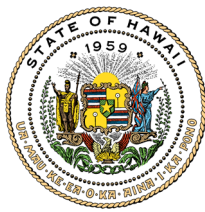
OHA strongly supports policies which reduce harmful psychological, social, cultural, and economic impacts on pa‘ahao, their ‘ohana, and the greater community. Native Hawaiians continue to be disproportionately impacted by Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system, comprising approximately 37% of the state’s correctional facilities, while representing only 21% of the total state population.<sup>1</sup> Ensuring those who have served their sentence have access to community-based support services, benefits determination assistance, employment assistance, temporary clean and sober housing, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and transitional housing is important to reducing recidivism by enabling these individuals to secure housing, apply for jobs, and travel back to their homes if incarcerated out of state.

This is a commonsense measure which helps to set individuals leaving prison for success upon their release. Therefore, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs urges this committee to **PASS HB 433 HD 1 SD 1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this critical issue.

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<sup>1</sup> “Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities – Final Report of the House Concurrent Resolution 85 Task Force on Prison Reform to the Hawai‘i Legislature – 2019 Regular Session,” HCR 85 Task Force; Legislative Reference Bureau (December 2018) at p. xiii, [https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/HCR-85\\_task\\_force\\_final\\_report.pdf](https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/HCR-85_task_force_final_report.pdf)

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



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

TOMMY JOHNSON  
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin  
Deputy Director  
Administration

Vacant  
Deputy Director  
Correctional Institutions

Sanna Muñoz  
Deputy Director  
Rehabilitation Services  
and  
Programs

No. \_\_\_\_\_

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

by  
Tommy Johnson, Director  
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Friday, March 28, 2025; 10:02 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & via Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) **supports the intent** of House Bill (HB) 433, House Draft (HD) 1, Senate Draft (SD) 1, which seeks to appropriate an unspecified amount of funding for fiscal year 2025 – 2026, and fiscal year 2026 – 2027 for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services, and requires DCR to submit an annual report to the legislature detailing the number of individuals released that received these services.

DCR sincerely appreciates the Legislature's interest in this matter and thanks Chair Della Au Belatti and the House Committee on Public Safety and other Legislators for their continued support in recommending the passage of this measure. DCR respectfully recommends the Legislature support 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, SD 1.



## **HB433 HD1 SD1 Reentry to Community Services for Offenders**

### COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Friday Mar 28, 2025 10:02 Room 211

### **Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Strongly Supports HB433 HD1 SD1:**

*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**.
    - ii. Key is to have **case management** after treatment that focuses on helping offenders “pursue abstinence” knowing that chronic illnesses tend to have relapses.
  - b. If **therapeutic living programs or outpatient**, then start at **housing and include outpatient**.
    - i. Education would be beneficial before, during and after treatment.
    - ii. Vocational training and employment can occur simultaneously with outpatient.
    - iii. Case management and **medication management** are key as part of and following treatment.
- 2. **For offenders with lower substance use** and either low or high functioning, it is **preferable to start with housing plans, case management, education, vocational training and employment with wrap around harm reduction practices**. If substance abuse continues without controlled use and especially if there are other behavioral health issues then counseling, medications, or outpatient treatment can be considered especially as for co-occurring substance misuse along with mental health disorders. Any needed substance use disorder or co-occurring disorder outpatient or counseling treatments would be best to include programming that addresses criminality issues. Medication management would be considered.
- 3. Using **nationally standardized screening and assessment tools** are **essential to develop appropriate reentry plans to determine an integrated approach for reentry**:
  - a. that incorporates residential or outpatient treatment as part of housing or
  - b. if substance abuse treatment is not needed, then integrate recovery-oriented services as part of housing, such as case management or medication management.
  - c. Vocational is key for long-term rehabilitation.
  - d. It is important that parole and probation are involved in every step with service providers.

**Telehealth also** considered a very cost-effective means for assessments and engagement.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and are available for further questions.

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

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

*Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor*



## COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Friday, March 28, 2025

Room 211 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

10:02 AM

## STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 433 HD1, SD1 - REENTRY

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki 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 3,720 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars<sup>1</sup> and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation as of March 24, 2025. We are always mindful that 936 – 49.5% - of Hawai'i's male prison population (1,890) 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 share our strong support for HB 433 HD1, SD1 that appropriates funds to DCR for reentry services to connect those being released with community-based services such as: treatment, housing, transportation, employment, etc. to effectuate a successful transition back to community life.

We especially support the requirement that DCR submit an annual report to the legislature to track the number of people released every year and describes the community-based services to which they were connected. We also suggest that these reports be placed on the DCR website as public information.

Let's learn from the ID debacle where 10,580 people were released since 2022 and only 150 have received their identification documents. That is 1.6% of the people released since 2022 have received the documents vital for successful community reintegration.

Mahalo nui for hearing this bill and we hope you support successful transition for folks coming home.

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<sup>1</sup> DCR Weekly Population Report, March 24, 2025

<https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2025-03-24.pdf>



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Friday, March 28, 2025, at 10:02AM  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

**RE: HB433 HD1 SD1 Relating to Public Safety**

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 Senate Draft 1 (HB433 HD1 SD1), which requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to submit an annual report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

HB433 HD1 SD1 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.

Hawaii must secure ongoing, sufficient funding for offender reentry services to enhance public safety by reducing the likelihood of recidivism. Other regions, such as Pima County, Arizona, demonstrate that connecting individuals released from incarceration to stable housing, employment, treatment, and community-based support services can significantly improve the transition process. The importance of these programs is underscored by the fact that access to mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and housing options often determines whether an individual can successfully reintegrate into society.

To further support transitioning offenders, this measure mandates that the department of corrections and rehabilitation provide an annual report on individuals who receive reentry services and allocates additional funds specifically for these programs. By formalizing and sustaining investment in community-based support, the bill aims to break the cycle of recidivism and foster safer communities. The Chamber supports this legislation because it bolsters a proven approach to public safety, strengthens community stability, and creates better outcomes for returning citizens.

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 Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.





Committee: Ways and Means  
Hearing Date/Time: Friday, March 28, 2025 at 10:02am  
Place: Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference  
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of HB433 HD1 SD1 Relating to Public Safety with an amendment**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The ACLU of Hawai'i **supports HB433 HD1 SD1**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

We are pleased that the Legislature recognizes the importance of providing reentry support services, and starting to prepare for reintegration on the first day of incarceration.

The Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) recently published their first report on the current State of Hawaii's reentry program.<sup>1</sup> The report paints an alarming picture of the limited progress DCR has made toward a truly rehabilitative model and fulfilling its statutory obligations under HRS Chapter 353 H Comprehensive Offender System.

Formerly incarcerated people need gainful employment, suitable housing, and educational opportunities to build stability and find success after incarceration. In fact, research has found that joblessness is the single most important predictor of recidivism.

While we support appropriations to enhance opportunities for reintegration planning and success, further public funds appropriations to the DCR must include accountability mechanisms, including but not limited to a comprehensive re-entry systems plan, re-entry best practices training for staff, periodic performance benchmarks and annual reporting requirements.

With this in mind, we ask the committee to adopt the following amendment:

1. The DCR shall establish and submit an annual performance benchmarks for compliance with H.R.S. Chapter 343 H on an annual basis to the Legislature and HCSOC in conformity with the HCSOC's inaugural report released on March 7, 2025."

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<sup>1</sup> Hoe Amau: The current state of reentry in Hawaii; <https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Hoe-Amau-Reentry-Report-Final.pdf>

This amendment would advance greater transparency and accountability, and allow for periodic review by both the Legislature and the HCSOC to evaluate the programs selected as part of the State's mandate to transition to a correctional system based on rehabilitation principles.

Relatedly, ACLU of Hawai'i encourages lawmakers to consider whether it is more cost-effective for DCR to spend the entire appropriation to hire additional staff, or contract with non-profit organizations with expertise in providing reintegration support services. The latter would allow service providers to reach into our jails and prisons, provide case management support and ensure a more seamless transition back into the community.

For these reasons, the ACLU of Hawai'i respectfully asks that you move this measure forward with the proposed amendments to **HB433 HD1 SD1**.

Sincerely,

**Carrie Ann Shirota**

Carrie Ann Shirota

Policy Director

ACLU of Hawai'i

[cshirota@acluhawaii.org](mailto:cshirota@acluhawaii.org)

*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.*

KAWAIILOA

# Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i

March 28, 2025

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hearing Time: 10:02 AM

Location: State Capitol Conference Room 211

Re: HB433 HD1 SD1, Relating to Public Safety

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 SD1, 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. Amendments to the bill require that the Department submit annual reports to the legislature detailing the number of individuals released that utilized reentry services, and made technical amendments to reflect these substantive changes.

Reentry services play a vital role in assisting individuals as they transition from incarceration to society. Studies consistently show that access to housing, employment, healthcare, and education significantly decreases the likelihood of reoffending. 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, 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 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 SD1.**

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