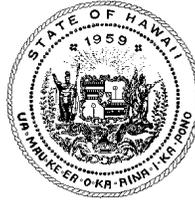


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'AINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION**
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalua Kalaima
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TOMMY JOHNSON
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Melanie Martin
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Deputy Director
Correctional Institutions

Sanna Muñoz
Deputy Director
Rehabilitation Services
and
Programs

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 433
RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY.

by
Tommy Johnson,

House Committee on Public Safety
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 5, 2025; 8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 411, Via Video Conference

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

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) **supports the intent** of House Bill (HB) 433, which seeks to appropriate \$4 million in funding to support the department's offender reentry needs. We sincerely appreciate the legislature's interest in this matter and thank Chair Della Au Belatti.

We recommend the legislature support the \$4 million included in the Governor's Executive Budget package to fund DCR's innovative reentry initiatives.

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

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 Della Au Belatti, Chair
The Honorable Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair
House Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: House Bill 433, Relating to Public Safety
Hearing: Wednesday, February 5, 2025; 8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 411

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

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) **supports** House Bill 433, 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.

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STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

LATE

February 4, 2025

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

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

The Office of the Public Defender **supports HB 433**. 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.

**Testimony to the House Committee on Public Safety
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at 8:30AM
Conference Room 411 & Videoconference**

RE: HB433 Relating to Public Safety

Aloha e Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, 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 (HB433), which appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.

HB433 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.

Recidivism remains a significant challenge to public safety and successful offender reintegration. The legislature recognizes that sustained funding for reentry services is critical to breaking this cycle. Jurisdictions like Pima County, Arizona, have successfully reduced recidivism through programs that provide treatment, housing, employment, and other community-based support.

To improve reintegration, this Act allocates \$4,000,000 from Hawaii's general revenues for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 to fund reentry services, including benefits assistance, employment support, sober housing, and mental health and substance abuse treatment. Managed by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, this investment promotes public safety and rehabilitation. The Chamber supports this measure as it not only enhances public safety but also strengthens the workforce, reduces incarceration costs, and fosters a more stable and productive community.

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. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



LATE

HB433 Reentry to Community Services for Offenders

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair

Wednesday Feb 5, 2025 8:30 Room 411

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Strongly Supports HB433:

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

Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor



COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Room 411 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

8:30 AM

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

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto 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 3,697 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars¹ and under the “care and custody” of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation on any given day. We are always mindful that 937 - 49% - of Hawai`i’s imprisoned male population are serving their sentences abroad -- thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

Community Alliance on Prisons appreciates this opportunity to 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 including the names and description of the community-based services to which individuals would be connected.

¹ DCR Weekly Population Report, January 20, 2025

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

Hawai`i's hard-working families want to see that there is a plan with a timeline for expending the \$4 million appropriated in 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 half-way 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!

HB-433

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 10:32:05 PM

Testimony for PBS on 2/5/2025 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carolyn Eaton. I am a resident of Makiki, and I am in strong support of this measure.

I appreciate this opportunity to share my wholehearted support for this common sense idea.

HB-433

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:29:55 AM

Testimony for PBS on 2/5/2025 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Belatti, Vice Chair Representative Iwamoto and Members of the Committee on Public Safety.

Please support HB 433 to help incarcerated people with re-entry community services.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu