

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/22/2023

**Time:** 03:17 PM

**Location:** CR 225 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Public Safety and  
Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Senate Higher Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 1129, HD1 RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN.

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates moneys as a grant to the Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice for the education and reentry program for incarcerated women. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

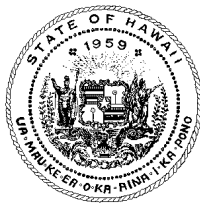
**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 1129, HD1.

The Department currently supports a grant, pursuant to Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, awarded to the Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice to assist incarcerated women in meeting their education goals.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

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



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'opalekana Lehulehu*  
1177 Alakea Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**TOMMY JOHNSON**  
DIRECTOR

**Melanie Martin**  
Deputy Director  
Administration

**Michael J. Hoffman**  
Acting Deputy Director  
Corrections

**William F. Oku**  
Deputy Director  
Law Enforcement

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

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1129, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

By

Tommy Johnson, Director

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

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 22, 2023; 3:17 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Via Video Conference

Chairs Wakai and Kim, Vice Chairs Elefante and Kidani, and Members of the  
Committees:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports House Bill (HB) 1129, House Draft (HD)1, which appropriates funding requiring McKinley Community School for Adults Moanalua Campus (MCSA) to work with Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice (HFRJ) to provide counseling services for incarcerated women participating in the education and reentry program for incarcerated women and offers the following comments.

As written, HB 1129, HD1 requires MCSA to work with HFRJ to provide counseling services for incarcerated women participating in education and reentry programs that is developed and administered by HFRJ and appropriates funding as a grant pursuant to Chapter 42F, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), to HFRJ to be expended by the University of Hawai'i Windward Community College (WCC) to continue administering education and reentry programs.

PSD respectfully recommends the committee consider deleting all references to MCSA and delete references to a grant under HRS Chapter 42F, and instead create a

Testimony on House Bill 1129, HD 1  
Senate Committee on Public Safety and  
Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
March 22, 2023  
Page 2

blank appropriation for an education and reentry program for incarcerated women, to be administered by the University of Hawai'i Windward Community College. It is also recommended that the funds be expended by the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1129, HD1.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at 3:17 p.m.

By

Della Teraoka, Interim Associate Vice President for Community Colleges  
University of Hawai'i System

#### HB 1129 HD1 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

Chairs Wakai and Kim, Vice Chairs Elefante and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 1129 HD1, which provides for education and re-entry of incarcerated women developed by Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice (HFRJ).

This program is not just a support program to help women study for and successfully pass the General Educational Development (GED) test, but also builds and recognizes employable skills while helping the women transition on to higher education post-GED. WCC has partnered with HFRJ to promote educational attainment at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). Last semester, WCC created a certificate for those who complete the HFRJ peer tutor training program which recognizes the training and experience as a qualification for student employee positions in college level tutoring. During their incarceration, it allows them to serve as tutors both in the GED program and also in college level classes which they complete post-GED. Post-release, this helps students to find campus-based work in order to pursue their college studies.

In addition to supporting students academically to master the GED, this program helps students to enroll in college level coursework via correspondence or online in instances when there are not enough students to offer the class in person at the facility. This allows all students to progress toward their degree efficiently when incarcerated.

The GED is the first step for women at WCCC to be able to continue on and then benefit from higher education. Through the tutoring program offered by HFRJ, women have been able to attain their GED at greater rates and in shorter time periods than previously, and then work to support other women to complete their GEDs as well. This cycle of achievement and giving promotes a better living and learning environment. Education has been shown to decrease violence and negative behavior patterns while incarcerated and lead to better outcomes post-incarceration.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 1129 HD1, on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1129 HD1.

**HB-1129-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 3:12:41 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/22/2023 3:17:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 supports HB1129. Please pass this bill.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member



## **COMMITTEE PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

Honorable Representative Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Honorable Representative Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

## **COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
HEARING DATE: Wednesday, March 22, 2023  
TIME: 3:17 PM, Via Videoconference & Conference Room 225

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 1129 HD1 RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN**

Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice (HFRJ) strongly supports this measure appropriating \$225,000 for the third year of this four-part higher and continuing education pilot program at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), which includes the extraordinarily successful GED peer tutoring program.

HFRJ is an educational non-profit entity that has decades of experience collaborating with other community partners to develop, apply, measure, and report on the outcomes of innovations to assist people in accessing justice. HFRJ's work has been replicated in other states and countries and is described in 50 academic articles. HFRJ uses restorative justice theory and practices in its innovations that are ideal for accessing justice. HFRJ is not a permanent service provider and only provides temporary services to develop evidence-based interventions. This unique education program seeks to motivate and support women in prison and after release to earn college degrees. The pilot program was recently described in a peer reviewed article. More papers are being drafted.

HFRJ supports the intent of this bill to fund the program by either giving HFRJ a 42F grant or giving the money to WCC—we are the two main partners in the project with WCCC. We have a strong history of collaboration and mutual goals which do not exist with the department of education (DOE). Therefore, we ask the funding be given to either HFRJ directly by 42F or via WCC.

Because state agencies have submitted confusing testimony about the GED and its testing at hearings to continue funding this project, we clarify that HFRJ has nothing to do with implementing the GED. Its involvement in the project was only to design and pilot an innovative and more successful education project at WCCC for three years. This bill is to only to fund year three of the project. Year two was funded, but the funds were only released this month by the DOE. In the meantime, the program has been supported with a small donation.

To date 23 women in WCCC have passed the GED within 12 months of the program's application, while previously one to two women earned GEDs. More women are studying for GEDs at WCCC than all other state prisons combined. Since October 2021, about 100 imprisoned women have participated in the program. Almost all the tutors released from WCCC are currently attending college with five enrolled at Windward Community College (4 full-time and 1 part-time). We urge the Committee to please pass this bill please and contact Lorenn Walker, JD, MPH, at lorenn@hawaii.edu or (808) 218-3712 if you have questions about the project.

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY  
AFFAIRS

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair; Sen. Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair; Sen. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 22, 2023  
3:17PM  
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference  
State Capitol

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB1129 RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

Women's Prison Project strongly supports HB1129 which appropriates \$225,000 to fund the third year of the highly successful education and academic counseling pilot program at the Women's Community Correctional Center.

Women's Prison Project supports the intent of this bill to fund the program by either giving a grant to Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice or giving the money to Windward Community College. HFRJ and WCC are the main partners in the pilot project with the prison and have a strong history of collaboration and mutual goals which do not exist with the HI DOE. Therefore, we ask the appropriation be given to either HFRJ or WCC.

**This program is different from the GED preparation offered by McKinley Community School, and it is demonstrably successful.**

This is a pilot project designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the cooperative learning model in engaging incarcerated women in GED completion and higher education. The program is a partnership that includes Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice, Windward Community College and the College of Social Sciences, University of Hawai'i. The program includes educational counseling provided by Windward Community College (WCC), the very successful cooperative learning GED Peer Tutoring Program, access to college courses leading to an associate degree from Windward Community College, academic advising for women transitioning from WCCC, and facilitation of their post-incarceration enrollment in community college or the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

This unique education program at WCCC has dramatically increased women's enrollment in GED preparation, resulting in 20 women passing the GED within 10 months of its inception, while the prison averaged only two women a year passing previously. Upon graduation, women may train to be peer tutors, strengthening their own academic skills and building confidence to apply for admission to community college courses with the support of academic counselors from Windward Community College. Women transitioning out of



prison are continuing their higher education, again with the support of academic advising by the Windward Community College counselor.

**This program is demonstrating an innovative approach that can help reduce recidivism.**

It is working in ways that previous education programs offered at WCCC did not, as evidenced by the women's participation, GED attainment and participation in college courses. Research has shown that individuals engaged in education while incarcerated and after transition to the community have significantly lower recidivism rates. The benefits of education go far beyond economics. Women in this program are discovering their strengths, intelligence, and abilities. They are learning to give back to the community by tutoring and encouraging their peers. They are developing future goals and experiencing pride in accomplishments. They are learning to believe a different life path is really possible.

Women's Prison Project urges this joint Committee to pass HB1129 and appropriate the requested funding to either Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice or Windward Community College.

Mahalo for this chance to testify in strong support of HB1129.

Linda Rich

On behalf of the Women's Prison Project

# 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)



## COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair

Sen. Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair

## COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Sen. Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Room 225 & Videoconference

3:17 PM

## STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 1129 HD1-PEER TUTORING EDUCATION

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Kim, Vice Chairs Elefante and Kidani and Members of the Committees!

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 3,981 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars<sup>1</sup> and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety/Corrections and Rehabilitation on any given day. We are always mindful that 917 - 24.4% of the male imprisoned population<sup>2</sup> - of Hawai'i's imprisoned people 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 the opportunity to share our thoughts and experiences in strong support of HB 1129 HD1 that appropriates funds for the education and reentry program for women at WCCC.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Safety, End of Month Population Report, February 28, 2023.

[https://dps.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Pop-Reports-EOM-2023-23-28\\_George-King.pdf](https://dps.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Pop-Reports-EOM-2023-23-28_George-King.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Why are 24.4% of Hawai'i's male prison population sent thousands of miles from home when the following prisons in Hawai'i have room here: Halawa is at 75%; Halawa Special Needs Facility is at 60%; Kulani is at 44%; Waiawa is at 53% of operational capacity.

Education is the route to economic mobility and since many Moms are imprisoned, programs like this are important to open up opportunities for woman who never thought they could go to college. Some of the women have offered compelling testimonies at committees about how their lives changed when they were introduced to possibilities that they had never imagined.

Poverty is one of the drivers of mass incarceration and education is the route out of poverty and onto economic mobility track.

This successful program has graduated 20 women with their GED's and many are taking college courses in anticipation of going to college when they are released. This is a dream that many women thought impossible for themselves. This peer tutoring program has helped many women realize their own potential.

Community Alliance on Prisons urges the committee to pass HB 1129 HD1 with a strong recommendation that the program be sufficiently funded. This program is the route out of poverty for women and enables them and their families to dream and thrive.

The impact on the children of Moms going to college is enormous and opens up the doors of opportunity for them as well!

We urge the committees to support this innovative and successful program that will reduce recidivism and can lift families out of poverty.

Mahalo!

*"Higher education is the strongest, sturdiest ladder to increased socio-economic mobility."*

*Drew Faust  
President Harvard University*

**HB-1129-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2023 6:33:17 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/22/2023 3:17:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB1129 HD1.

# ***A'O AKU, A'O MAI...* We teach, and we learn.**

## **STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1129**

Aloha my name is Simone' "Nanilei" Kamaunu and I am sharing how this program has helped me as a person, built up my confidence and helped me further my education.

I have been trying to get my GED for about 17 years. I tried books, taking classes in and out of prison, online, and in person tests but just couldn't get it.

While incarcerated recently at the Women's Community Correctional Center I heard about a program that will have tutors helping with GEDs.

This I thought, hey why not I tried about everything else. So, I signed up. And it was one of the best choices I've ever made.

The first day I was kind of surprised at how many others signed up too.

I walked into this class not knowing how much this would change my life.

I was a part of the first group of tutees. The tutors were other inmates so this kind of made me feel comfortable to be okay with not knowing things.

It's a little bit more difficult when you don't want to seem dumb in front of strangers. Well for myself it was. That day I also met Lorenn Walker. She had a plan on how the tutors would work with us and it was definitely different. After breaking off to where I fit in and where I needed help, it was personal. My tutor didn't judge me for how much or how little I knew.

After about a month of working with my tutor I felt I was ready to take my test. Again, I failed but this time I knew I had it in me. My tutor broke it down on where I was missing and we focused on that area.

Trying again I got it!! I passed. The team of tutors kept cheering me on and didn't let me give up on myself when I could have. I passed my GED within two and half months' time of starting this program.

Getting my GED opened doors for me to be a part of cohort 2. And I became a tutor! The styles and methods of teaching and learning were working and I have had the opportunity of helping one of my tutees get her GED.

That felt AWESOME to be able to give back what was given to me, that sparked something in me. I wanted to further my education and now was able to do so by signing up for college classes.

Taking classes, getting certified, teaching, helping others, and training cohort 3 & 4 have lit a fire in me and made me feel good. My confidence was boosted, I believed in myself and others, my family was proud and everything was falling into place.

I didn't want to go back to my old lifestyle and I found a way that I didn't have too. EDUCATION. Being a part of this program didn't just help me with my GED, I had a job, it helped me set goals, rebuild my relationship with my 'Ohana through Huikahi Circles, obtain 6 college credits before leaving the facility, getting 2 different certifications, helped me earn money while inside, helped me set a foundation, helped with reintegrating into society, kept me responsible and so much more.

Now that I have integrated back into society, I am a fulltime student at Windward Community College pursuing my degree in Hawaiian Language. I am also a Hawaiian studies student assistant at Windward.

My family relations are healthy, I'm clean and sober, living my best life. This is all because of this program that believed in me.

This has definitely been a life changing experience. Mahalo nui loa for taking my testimony into consideration and lastly, I ask you to pass HB1129 out of this committee. Please allow this program to continue.

Forever grateful,

Simone' Nanilei' Kamaunu

**HB-1129-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 9:24:13 AM

Testimony for PSM on 3/22/2023 3:17:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Raelyn Reyno Yeomans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB1129 HD1. Studies are unanimous in their findings that education lowers recidivism. This bill is a no brainer. More and easily accessible education opportunities for incarcerated women ( and men) makes sense in reduced recidivism rates which saves the taxpayers' money and makes are communities stronger and safer. Thank you.

**HB-1129-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 12:42:30 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/22/2023 3:17:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chairs Wakai and Kim, Vice Chairs Elefante and Kidani and Members of the Committees,

My name is Carolyn Eaton and I am a registered voter in living in Honolulu. I am very supportive of this bill becoming law. There is already a track record of success for it in the graduation of 20 Peer Tutors. The changes we'll see if this bill and the collaboration with Hawaii Friends for Restorative Justice becomes law, will redound to your great credit.

Thank you for considering my testimony and giving your support to our incarcerated women.



**HB-1129-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2023 12:20:47 AM

Testimony for PSM on 3/22/2023 3:17:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristine Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Education and the inspirational experience of peer tutoring make a better future more likely for those who are incarcerated—and, consequently, for the families and communities to which they return. Please pass HB1129 HD1 to provide the necessary funding to Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice, the organization that originated and is administering this successful program. Thank you.

**HB-1129-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2023 1:35:51 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/22/2023 3:17:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Wendy Gibson-Viviani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs Wakai and Kim, Vice Chairs, Elefante and Kidani and Members of the Committees,

My name is Wendy Gibson-Viviani and I am an RN who has lived on Oahu for 30 years.

I write in support of HB1129 as it will help promote more education for incarcerated women, raising the chances that they will be more successful when re-entering society--and will be less likely to return.

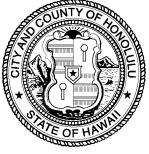
I've read that poverty is one of the drivers of mass incarceration and that education is the route back out--to economic stability.

Please support efforts to continue funding these important and successful projects by passing HB1129.

Thank you for the opportunity to lend my voice in support of this important bill.

Wendy Gibson-Viviani RN/BSN

Kailua (808) 321-4503



KAHALU'U NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 29

*(He'eia Kea. 'Āhuimanu. Kahalu'u. Waihe'e. Ka'alaea. Waiāhole. Waikāne. Hakipu'u. Kualoa)*

C/o Neighborhood Commission Office ◊ 925 Dillingham Boulevard, Suite 160 ◊ Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

PHONE (808) 768-3710 ◊ FAX (808) 768-3711 ◊ INTERNET: <http://www.honolulu.gov/nco>

*"LET US NOT EVER HAVE AN UNHAPPY MINORITY; RATHER, LET US BUILD A COMMUNITY CONSENSUS."*

Senate Committees on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
& Higher Education  
Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at 3:17 p.m.  
Conf. Rm. 225 & Videoconference  
State Capitol

**RE: HB 1129, HD1, Relating to Incarcerated Women**

Aloha e nā Luna Ho'omalū Wakai a me Kim, nā Hope Luna Ho'omalū Elefante a me Kidani, a me nā lālā o kēia mau kōmike o ka'Aha Kenekoa.

In our regular board meeting on March 8, 2023, the Kahalu'u Neighborhood Board #29 voted unanimously to **support the concepts** of HB 1129, HD1, which appropriates moneys as a grant to the Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice for the education and reentry program for incarcerated women.

Mahalo for this opportunity to offer testimony and please do advance this measure.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ka'ano'i Walk". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ka'ano'i Walk, Chair  
Kahalu'u Neighborhood Board #29

**HB-1129-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2023 2:36:56 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/22/2023 3:17:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diana Bethel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of HB1129 HD1 which provides funding for the final year of this innovative three-year education and reentry program for incarcerated women at the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC). This highly successful pilot program was developed and is being administered by the Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice (HFRJ).

The reason this program is so successful, I believe, is that it is based on a cooperative learning model of education that is student-centered, interactive and, through its peer tutoring program, stimulates a desire to serve and gives many of the women a sense of meaning and purpose. This motivation to learn makes many of the students eager to pursue a higher education to create a new life for themselves. The program helps women while at WCCC as well as after release to pursue college degrees.

The HRFJ program is strikingly different from the PSD Dept. of Education GED program. The reality is that the traditional model of education does not work for all students. Nearly 20 percent, or 1 in 5, young people in Hawaii do not complete high school. The one-size-fits-all, forced learning model of education produces shame, anxiety, and fear of not knowing, which extinguishes intellectual curiosity. Women have said that their past educational experiences made them feel that they were stupid and incapable of learning, that they were a failure. But it would be more accurate to say that the educational system failed these students.

In contrast, HFRJ’s pilot program tries to repair the damage inflicted by the traditional model of education. The cooperative learning model provides a supportive, dynamic, and transformative learning experience. It emphasizes social emotional learning, creates emotional readiness for learning, and is solutions-focused to increase critical thinking. It also increases confidence and improves students’ ability to articulate and share knowledge.

It appears that simply duplicating the traditional model in a prison context doesn’t inspire the same life-changing experience the way a cooperative learning model does. While someone with a traditional educational mindset may not fully appreciate the value this program offers, the evidence speaks for itself.

Given that last year’s funding for 2022-2023 of this program was given to the McKinley Community School for Adults and it was held there until just a few weeks ago, it is

recommended that the legislature provide funding directly to the Hawaii Friends for Restorative Justice via a 42 F grant or by giving the funds to Windward Community College, with which HFRJ has a long history of collaboration in providing education services to WCCC.

Please pass HB1129 HD1 to keep this innovative and successful pilot program going for its third and final year of implementation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Diana Bethel