

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:** 02/22/2023

**Time:** 09:30 AM

**Location:** CR 211 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** SB 0710, SD1 RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the McKinley Community School for Adults to work with Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice to provide counseling services for incarcerated women participating in the education and reentry program for incarcerated women, developed and administered by Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice. Appropriates moneys as a chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, grant for the University of Hawaii Windward Community College education and reentry program for incarcerated women developed and administered by Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice. Authorizes the University of Hawaii Windward Community College to award grants to a private entity. (SD1)

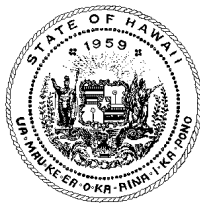
**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education supports SB 710, SD1.

The McKinley Community School for Adults welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice and Windward Community College to provide counseling services to meet the educational needs of incarcerated women.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'opalekana Lehulehu*  
1177 Alakea Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 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 SENATE BILL 710, SD1  
RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

By

Tommy Johnson, Director  
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 22, 2023; 9:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 and Via Video Conference

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports Senate Bill (SB) 710, SD1 which appropriates funding requiring McKinley community school for adults to work with Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice to provide counseling services for incarcerated women participating in the education and reentry program for incarcerated women and offers the following comments.

As written, SB 710 SD1 appropriates funding as a grant pursuant to Chapter 42F, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), to Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice to be expended by the University of Hawai'i Windward Community College (WCC) for the purposes of this Act. PSD supports the standards for administrative grants that establishes requirements for the selected applicant to comply with. Specifically, requiring the selected applicant to make available to WCC all records the applicant may have relating to the grant, to allow state agencies to monitor the applicant's compliance.

PSD is mandated to follow education procedures that include Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) testing (a nationally recognized standardized test) to determine an initial Grade Equivalent (GE) level for each student, participation in Essential

Education's "GED Academy" that supplements the 4 sections of the GED exam with supplemental course work and related practice tests, and the administering of the "GED Ready" practice tests for students scoring 145 or higher on GED Academy. More importantly, PSD is an authorized test center under Pearson VUE and to administer computer-based and paper GED tests, a Pearson VUE Certified Administrator needs to be present that adheres to the rules of conduct and certification agreement. Failure to protect the exam content degrades the value of certifications and puts our GED test centers at risk of losing the right to deliver exams.

Currently, PSD and Department of Education (DOE), McKinley Community School for Adults Moanalua Campus (MCSA) collaborate to issue Hawai'i State Adult Community School Diplomas for students who pass their GED tests at WCCC.

To ensure the integrity of the GED tutoring and test-taking process by documented GED records using Essential Education's website provided at statewide correctional facilities, PSD will continue to work with DOE/MCSA, WCC and its selected grant applicant in meeting the educational and counseling needs of incarcerated women.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 710, SD1.



**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM**

**‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII**

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

**LATE**

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

By

Della Teraoka, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of Hawai'i System

## SB 710 SD1 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 710 SD1, which provides for supportive education and re-entry of incarcerated women, as developed by Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice (HFRJ).

This program supports incarcerated women to achieve the high school equivalency and then to continue on to college while incarcerated, as well as to further studies post-incarceration. In the program developed by HFRJ in collaboration with the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), Windward Community College (WCC), University of Hawai'i at Manoa, and McKinley Community School for Adults (MCSA), the General Educational Development (GED) test is just a first step to college going and lifelong learning. This is not a GED program. GED testing is offered by the Department of Public Safety and is paid for through vouchers from MCSA. WCC and HFRJ do not proctor or offer the GED, ensuring testing integrity and removing conflicts of interest.

WCC and HFRJ have partnered to grow students through collaborative learning and peer tutoring techniques, which not only helps women study for and successfully pass the GED, but also builds workforce readiness skills. The students learn leadership, collaboration, alternative strategy development and effective methods for promoting learning. Recognizing these skills, we created a certificate for those who complete the HFRJ peer tutor training program which documents the training and experience as a qualification for student employee positions in college level tutoring. During their incarceration, the certificate 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. This can help them to comply with post-release work requirements and to survive economically.

In addition to supporting GED attainment and leadership building, the program actively promotes enrollment in college pre- and post-incarceration. Students are supported to enroll in WCC coursework at WCCC. The methodology used also helps the students support each other in these college courses.

When there are not enough students to offer a needed class in person at the facility, this program provides tuition for students to enroll in college level coursework via correspondence. This allows all students to progress toward their degree efficiently when incarcerated.

The program then further helps students again when they are ready to transition post-release, counseling them on educational opportunities post-incarceration and on making appropriate decisions as they transition to re-entry.

The GED is only the first stepping stone for women at WCCC to be able to continue on and then benefit from higher education. Through the program offered by HFRJ, women have been able to attain their GED at greater rates and in shorter time periods than previously. Furthermore, they then work to support other women to complete 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.

We urge the Committee to please pass this bill, which maintains a successful pathway to improved outcomes for incarcerated women.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 710 SD1, as long as 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 SB 710 SD1.



COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: Wednesday, February 22, 2023  
TIME: 9:30 AM, Via Videoconference & Conference Room 211

## **STRONG SUPPORT FOR SB710 SD1 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, which are ideal for accessing justice. 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](#) and other papers on the project are being drafted for publication.

Because there has been confusing testimony submitted by state agencies at hearings on the bills to continue funding this project regarding GED testing, we want to clarify that HFRJ has nothing to do with GED testing. Its involvement in this project was only to design and pilot the project for three years. This bill is to only to fund year three of the project. Year two was funded, but the funds have not been released by the state and HFRJ has supported it with a small donation.

The program's remarkable results include 20 women passing the GED within 10 months of its application while the prison averaged only two women a year passing previously. More women are actively studying for the GED at WCCC than all the other prisons in the state combined. Since October 2021, about 100 imprisoned women have participated in the program. Almost all the tutors released from WCCC are in college today with four enrolled at WCC (3 full-time and 1 part-time).

We urge the Committee to please pass this bill. If you have any questions about HFRJ's support or more details about the program please contact Lorenn Walker, JD, MPH, at [lorenn@hawaii.edu](mailto:lorenn@hawaii.edu) or (808) 218-3712.

## COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair    Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 9:30AM

Via videoconference, Conference Room 211

State Capitol

### **STRONG SUPPORT SB710 RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN.**

The Women's Prison Project (WPP) strongly supports this measure appropriating \$225,000 for the third year of the higher and continuing education pilot program at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). 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.

**The program is a collaborative effort of WCCC, Windward Community College (WCC), Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice, and the College of Social Sciences, University of Hawai'i. The program's remarkable results include 20 women passing the GED within 10 months of its inception, while the prison averaged only two women a year passing previously.**

The unique education program being piloted at WCCC has dramatically increased women's enrollment in GED preparation, applications for GED testing and enrollment in college courses. Women transitioning out of prison are continuing their higher education with the support of academic advising by the Windward Community College counselor. This is what rehabilitation looks like.

Research has shown that engagement in education while incarcerated and after release from prison significantly reduces recidivism. Education is the proven pathway to better employment opportunities, financial stability and increased ability to problem solve and think critically. About 60% of WCCC residents are high school dropouts. Without additional education, these women face difficulty finding employment. If they

find employment it is likely to pay minimum wage. Recidivism among women is often characterized by what researchers have called “survival crimes”. Faced with Hawaii’s high cost of living, women in low-paying minimum wage jobs are often unable to meet basic needs for housing, food, transportation, etc. for themselves and their children. Returning to low level, non-violent crime can be seen as a survival alternative. Women engaged in the collaborative program between Windward Community College, Hawaii Friends for Restorative Justice, and the College of Social Sciences have a better alternative; higher education and the potential for employment that will provide stability in their lives. Most of the program’s peer tutors have entered college upon release from prison or are working toward that goal.

Women’s Prison Project urges you to pass SB710 and appropriate the requested funding to Windward Community College.

Mahalo for this chance to testify in strong support of SB710.

Linda Rich  
On behalf of the Women’s Prison Project



**SB-710-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 10:37:13 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB710 SD1. Mahalo.

**SB-710-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 11:33:56 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sassie Keaulana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB 710 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

Chair Wakai, Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members

of the Committee:

As a community member in general I would like to testify in support of SB710. Although, I have not experienced being incarcerated a close friend of mine has. Sharing her experience, and struggles is what prompted me to submit testimony. Improving herself was a struggle. She eventually earned her G.E.D. and is currently enrolled in college. This bill will help others who may suffer barriers to achieving success. This bill would help support women after incarceration. Mahalo for your time and opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB710.

Sassie Keaulana

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