

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

**2320**

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 15 2022**

RE: S.B. No. 3207

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2022  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 3207 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO WOMEN'S COURT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish a three-year women's court pilot program in the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, which is intended to acknowledge the distinct pathways that lead women into the criminal justice system and address their individual needs.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Department of Human Services, Hawaii State Bar Association, Women's Prison Project, and two individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance.

Your Committee finds that there has been a significant increase in the number of women in Hawai'i jails and prisons over the past forty years, resulting in a higher proportion of women who are incarcerated. Research reflects that for women, histories of abuse, trauma, poverty, mental illness, substance abuse disorders, and unhealthy relationships intersect with their entry into criminal behavior. Women offenders also face unique barriers to success after incarceration. They are more likely to be primary caregivers for young children, have lower educational attainment, lack stable work history, and experience economic or



social marginalization, which prevents them from having more positive outcomes. Your Committee believes that the State should work to better address the particular needs of women in the criminal justice system. This measure will assist the State in addressing the distinct pathways that lead women into the criminal justice system by establishing a three-year women's court pilot program in the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 3207 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Judiciary,



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KARL RHOADS, Chair



