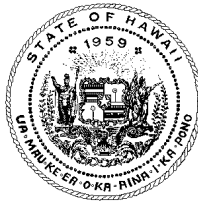


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION**
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalua 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 SENATE BILL 224, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION.

by
Tommy Johnson

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

Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 411 & via Videoconference

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

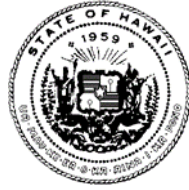
The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 224, Senate Draft (SD) 1, which proposes DCR to collaborate with other agencies to inform and assist inmates in obtaining identifying documents as soon as practicable, or within established time frames.

As part of the intake process and with the inmate's consent, DCR notifies and assists inmates with obtaining civil ID Cards, replacement birth certificates and/or social security cards, if needed. DCR obtains social security cards through its Memorandum of Agreement with the office of the Social Security Administration. DCR is also exploring the possibility of including assistance with renewing inmates' Hawai'i State driver's licenses prior to expiration while incarcerated.

DCR is working with the City and County to update the current State satellite machine at the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), as well as secure additional satellite identification machines for other DCR facilities to supplement its efforts and increase the number of inmates DCR assists.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of SB 224, SD 1.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELawe KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

March 10, 2025

TO: The Honorable Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
House Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 224 SD 1 – RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION.**

Hearing: March 12, 2025, 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 411 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this measure, defers to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and provides clarification. DHS clarifies that identification documents such as birth certificates are used to access social services, including Medicaid; however, a government-issued identification *card* is not a current requirement. Additionally, the DHS Med-QUEST Division (MQD) accepts self-attested information from applicants, removing barriers to applying. MQD only requires documents if the attested information does not match available data sources.

PURPOSE: This bill requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, to assist inmates in obtaining the inmates' civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society, as soon as practicable. Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to initiate the process of obtaining identifying documents for inmates released to work furlough, extended furlough, or community

placement programs, by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain civil identification cards and other identifying documents to the inmate as soon as practicable. (SD1)

The Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means amended this measure by requiring the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to provide assistance to inmates in obtaining identification cards and other identifying documents even if the Department fails to meet the timelines established by this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

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: Senate Bill 224, Senate Draft 1, Relating to Identification
Hearing: Wednesday, March 12, 2025; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 411

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

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) **supports** Senate Bill 224, Senate Draft 1, Relating to Identification, which will not only affect the timeliness in which people in custody are *informed* of departmental assistance in obtaining applicable identification documents, but also the timeliness in which they *receive assistance* in obtaining their identification documents.

First and foremost, the HCSOC acknowledges the Department's ongoing collaboration with the DMV and the efforts to expand identification processing capabilities at the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) and the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). While the DCR has made progress in collaborating with agencies and facilitating access to identification documents, the Commission found that the Department has not fully met the statutory requirements under §353H-32. Significant gaps remain in informing people in custody about available assistance, prioritizing support for those within one year of release, adhering to prescribed timelines, and providing forms in the individual's primary language.

The Commission found that even though legislative funds have been allocated for this purpose, the DCR reported that, of the 10,580 individuals released since 2022, only 150 received identification cards with DCR assistance, and just 32 of these were provided at no cost. A total of approximately \$61,800 was spent on this identification effort, with \$1,280 directly funding identification card issuance and the remaining \$60,000 allocated to infrastructure.

In addressing §353H-32(b), the DCR has made progress through an MOU with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to assist people in custody in obtaining Social Security cards. Despite this progress, further collaboration with federal, state, and county agencies is needed to streamline access to birth certificates and other relevant identification documents. The MOU limits eligibility to those with confirmed release dates within 120 days, excluding individuals with less than six weeks remaining and

parolees who typically receive only two weeks' notice. This approach does not align with the statutory requirement to assist people in custody *within the one-year period prior to parole or release*. Again, the HCSOC does not recommend discontinuing the use of the SSA MOU, but rather finding additional ways for expansion. Additionally, DCR does not consistently inform people in custody about the availability of this assistance, leaving a statutory obligation unmet.

Ensuring individuals receive their identification cards upon release from correctional facilities significantly impacts a formerly incarcerated person's ability to reintegrate into society by providing access to basic necessities like housing, employment, and social services, which are often inaccessible without proper identification. This ultimately impacts the overall population by potentially reducing recidivism rates and promoting successful reentry.

This low number of identification cards issued, especially those provided at no cost, suggests the need for a more effective and efficient strategy, as providing identification is essential for successful reentry. This includes starting the identification application process upon admission to custody, allowing sufficient time to gather required documents and ensure successful identification issuance before release.

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.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 224 SD 1
RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION

House Committee on Public Safety
Hawai'i State Capitol

March 12, 2025

10:00AM

Room 411

Dear Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the House Committee on Public Safety:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB 224 SD 1 which requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, to assist inmates in obtaining their civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society, as soon as practicable but at least one year before the inmate's parole or release date; provided that the department shall assist inmates in obtaining a civil identification card even if the department fails to meet the timelines established by this measure.

OHA strongly supports policies which reduce harmful psychological, social, cultural, and economic impacts on pa'ahao, their 'ohana, and the greater Hawaiian 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.¹ Ensuring those who have served their sentence receive their identifying documents in a timely manner, meaning before their release, 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.

OHA appreciates recent amendments requiring the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to assist inmates with obtaining identification cards and other identifying documents even if the Department fails to meet the timelines established by this measure. SB

¹ "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

224 SD 1 is a commonsense measure which helps to set individuals leaving prison for success upon their release. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs urges this committee to **PASS SB 224 SD 1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this critical issue.



Committee: Public Safety
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, March 23, 2025 at 10:00am
Place: Conference Room 411 & via Videoconference
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in support of SB224 SD1 Relating to Corrections with an Amendment**

Dear Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto and Committee Members:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") writes in **support of SB224 SD1**. This bill requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR), in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, to assist inmates in obtaining the inmates' civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society, as soon as practicable.

The ACLU of Hawai'i **advocates for diversion and decarceration strategies to reduce the number of people in our jails and prisons**. Simultaneously, we advocate for humane conditions of confinement, meaningful rehabilitation opportunities, and **comprehensive re-entry support services**.

Successful reintegration planning starts from the first day of incarceration.

We acknowledge that the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) has taken some incremental steps towards fulfilling the statutory requirements under HRS §353H-32. However, the data highlighted by the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission suggests that there is room for significant improvement to assist individuals in obtaining identification cards:

- Since 2022, only 150 incarcerated persons of the 10,580 persons released received identification cards with DCR assistance.
- Only 32 of the 150 persons assisted with identification cards were provided at no costs.
- A total of approximately \$61,800 was spent on this identification effort, with \$1,280 directly funding identification card issuance and the remaining \$60,000 allocated to infrastructure.

Enhancing opportunities for successful reintegration begins with rehabilitation services while incarcerated and at minimum, an identification card upon release from our jails and prisons. Without an identification card, a person is unable to obtain housing,

employment, social services, education, a medical prescription and access to other life opportunities.

Proposed Amendment

To ensure compliance with the law and accountability, we recommend that DCR submit an Annual Report to the State Legislature and include the number of persons assisted and separately those who actually received an identification card upon release from our jails and prisons.

The Report should also include the number of persons who were released without an identification and a summary explanation for the person's release without identification.

In closing, we respectfully request that you pass **SB224 SD1** with the proposed amendment.

Sincerely,

Carrie Ann Shirota

Carrie Ann Shirota

Policy Director

ACLU of Hawai'i

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 that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for over 50 years.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i
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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, March 12, 2025

Room 411 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

10:00 AM

STRONG SUPPORT FOR SB224 SD1 - ID DOCUMENTS

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 3,723 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars¹ and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation as of March 3, 2025. We are always mindful that 938 - 49.5% - of Hawai'i's male prison 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 express our strong support for SB 224 SD1.

The law passed in 2017 and 8 years later, DCR is still making excuses for now issuing identification documents to those being released. WHY? The Waikiki Health Center Pu'uhoonua Project seems to be able to do this for those reentering the community with no problem.

The Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission testified that "...even though funds have been allocated for this purpose, the DCR reported that of the **10,580 individuals released since 2022, only 150 received identification cards with DCR assistance, and just 32 of these were provided at no cost. A total of approximately \$61,800 was spent on this identification effort, with \$1,280 directly funding identification card issuance and the remaining \$60,000 allocated to infrastructure.**"

¹ DCR Weekly Population Report, March 3, 2025

<https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2025-03-03-2.pdf>

This bill mandates that DCR initiate the process instead of waiting for a person to ask for help.

After being isolated from the community for many years, we doubt that a person even knows what to ask for or knows what documents are needed to find employment, secure housing, open a bank account, and to seek healthcare.

Here's a short story about a man who was incarcerated for 10 years, many of those in Saguaro – the contracted corporate prison in Eloy, Arizona. He was brought back to Hawai'i and released from Halawa at 8 or 9 pm. He had no money and no identification. Luckily someone let him use their cellphone and he called me.

I advised him to find a 24-hour internet café and to call me at 6am the next morning. This man walked from Halawa to Waikiki and he called me in the morning.

I gave him directions to my house so he would have a safe place to stay until I could find him a halfway house.

This is just one story of thousands about people being released with nothing. What do we expect to happen when a person is released at night with no resources?

Community Alliance on Prisons loves that the committees amended this measure **REQUIRING** DCR to assist people in obtaining identification cards and other identifying documents and we hope that this committee supports successful reentry for those being released from incarceration.

Mahalo!

House Committee on Public Safety

Wednesday, March 12, 2025 10:00 AM Room 411

TESTIMONY FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ON SB 224 SD1 RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration of this measure.

Waikiki Health is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) providing comprehensive primary care through multiple clinics in Waikiki, McCully/Moiliili, Kaimuki, and via a mobile medical unit. In addition, we operate the Pu'uhonua Prison Program, which supports individuals transitioning from incarceration to the community, with a focus on reducing homelessness and recidivism.

Access to identification documents has been a significant factor in successful reintegration for individuals in our program. Many of the individuals we serve face barriers to obtaining identification, which can limit their ability to secure housing, employment, and healthcare. Based on our experience working with returning citizens, policies that streamline access to identification may help address these challenges and support public health and safety outcomes.

We appreciate the committee's attention to this issue and welcome the opportunity to share data and insights from our program to inform policy discussions.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.



Alexis Charpentier (MPH)
Chief Executive Officer, Waikiki Health

Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i

KAWAIILOA

March 12, 2025

House Committee on Public Safety

Hearing Time: 10:00AM

Location: Room 411 via Videoconference

Re: SB224 SD1, Relating to Identification

Aloha e Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i hui, we are writing in **strong support of SB224 SD1, relating to identification**. This bill requires that, as soon as practicable, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, assist inmates in obtaining a civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society and to initiate the process of obtaining identifying documents for inmates released to work or extended furlough, or community placement programs, by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain civil identification cards and other identifying documents.

Identifying documents, such as civil identification cards, birth certificates, and Social Security cards are often required to access many societal resources, such as social and medical services, secure housing, and employment. Not only is identification needed to access these resources, it is also necessary to obtain other forms of identification—for example, a birth certificate is required to obtain a driver's license.

For inmates, access to such credentials is not easy. Most inmates' belongings, including their identifying documents, are confiscated upon incarceration and may not be returned upon release. If the documents are returned, they are often expired or invalid. Therefore, inmates must purchase new identifying documents. However, the cost of buying new identifying documents is high and inmates are unlikely to have an income upon release to pay for them, especially with added incarceration status or court processing fees. This cost also does not include time and travel expenses to access the identification services' facilities and personnel. Inmates also have little to no access to identification services while incarcerated, so it is unlikely that they will acquire identifying documents shortly after their release. Thus, inmates endure adversity upon release in accessing essential services and support, and employment opportunities like work or extended furlough or community placement programs, without the necessary identification documentation already available.

By requiring that the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and various agencies assist inmates in obtaining identifying documents as soon as practicable, for work and extended furlough and community placement program opportunities and to access employment, social and medical services, and secure housing, SB224 SD1 cultivates the successful reentry of inmates into society.

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 SB224 SD1.**

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

SB-224-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 3:29:06 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/12/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorenn Walker	Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for your public service.

Please support SB 224 and take all necessary steps to require our state Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) to provide identification to individuals upon their release. Access to ID is essential for a successful reentry into the community.

DCR has had eight years to comply with the Legislature's directive to issue identification, yet it [continues to deflect responsibility](#)—even blaming the incarcerated—rather than addressing its own failure. This lack of accountability is both frustrating and unacceptable. Effective leadership takes responsibility and implements solutions, regardless of challenges. Good management is proactive, creative, and problem-solving.

With an annual budget of approximately \$300 million, issuing photo IDs upon release should be a fundamental and non-negotiable service. Ensuring individuals have this basic document is critical not only for their reintegration but for the well-being of our entire community.

Please do everything in your power to ensure that the majority of people leaving incarceration are set up for successful reentry.

Mahalo again for your service. Please contact Lorenn Walker at lorenn@hawaiiifriends.org if you need further information about our testimony.

To: The Honorable Senator Elefante, Chair Wakai, Members of the Committee of the Judiciary, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

RE: SB224 SD1

Date of Hearing: Wednesday Mar 12, 2025

Time: 10:00am

Location: Room 411 via Videoconference

Submitted on: Mar 9, 2025

Aloha Senator Elfante, Vice Chair Wakai, Members of the Committee of the Judiciary, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Juliana Saenz, and I am a social work student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 224, which mandates the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to assist inmates in obtaining essential identification and other critical documents necessary for their successful reentry into society.

Individuals face many barriers post incarceration and this bill addresses these issues. By mandating this, it will help reduce recidivism and give people the opportunity to have a smoother transition. Supporting this bill is a step in the right direction to create a more fair and effective system. Tasks for former inmates such as obtaining housing, opening a bank account, applying for a job, all require proper identification and without these documents they can be set back for months at a time. This is such a small investment in the long term to help set up our fellow community members up for success.

Mahalo,

Juliana Saenz

SB-224-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 2:34:43 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/12/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carla Allison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB224. ID is crucial for a person reentering the community to open a bank account, find housing, secure employment, entering government buildings, etc. It is beyond frustrating that DCR has not delivered on, and is still making excuses for not issuing & getting ID documents to folks being released, years after the passage of a law requiring it be done. SB224 mandates that DCR initiate the process instead of waiting for people to ask for help. Please support SB224.