



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 9:31 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 016 and Videoconference

by

Rodney A. Maile

Administrative Director of the Courts

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Resolution No. and Title: Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 26, Requesting the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in Planning and Designing the New Oahu Community Correctional Center in Halawa, to include Circuit and District Court Facilities and Establish a Release Procedure Under Which Detainees or Inmates, Upon Release, are Transported to a Site Other than Residential Communities or Public Spaces.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports the intent of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 26 to incorporate a courtroom facility within the design of the new Oahu Community Correctional Center in Halawa, and we believe that a single multipurpose courtroom facility would be sufficient.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this Concurrent Resolution.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION**
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No. _____

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 26
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION,
IN PLANNING AND DESIGNING THE NEW OAHU COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL
CENTER IN HALAWA, TO INCLUDE CIRCUIT AND DISTRICT COURT FACILITIES
AND ESTABLISH A RELEASE PROCEDURE UNDER WHICH DETAINEES OR
INMATES, UPON RELEASE, ARE TRANSPORTED TO A SITE OTHER THAN
RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES OR PUBLIC SPACES.

by
Tommy Johnson, Director
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 2, 2025; 9:31 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016 & via Videoconference

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) **supports the intent** of Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 26, which requests that DCR, in the planning and designing of the new Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) in Halawa, to coordinate with the Judiciary to include circuit and district court facilities in the new OCCC, and establish a release procedure under which detainees or inmates, upon release, are transported to a site other than residential communities or public spaces.

DCR understands the intent of SCR 26 and believes that a single multipurpose courtroom in the new OCCC, that can be utilized by both the circuit and district courts, will be sufficient and beneficial for the community. DCR will review all available options, with respect to transporting detainees and inmates upon release to an alternate location.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony supporting the intent of SCR 26.

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
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(808) 587-4160

TO: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Resolution 26, Requesting the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in planning and designing the new Oahu Community Correctional Center in Halawa, to include circuit and district court facilities and establish a release procedure under which detainees or inmates, upon release, are transported to a site other than residential communities or public spaces.
Hearing: Monday, April 2, 2025; 9:31 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 016

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) **supports** Senate Concurrent Resolution 26, Requesting the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in planning and designing the new Oahu Community Correctional Center in Halawa, to include circuit and district court facilities and establish a release procedure under which detainees or inmates, upon release are transported to a site other than residential communities or public spaces.

Implementing an on-site courtroom presents a transformative opportunity to enhance security, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness in the judicial and correctional systems. The financial burden of defendant transportation is substantial, encompassing fuel expenses, vehicle maintenance, and the manpower required for safe transit. The establishment of an on-site courtroom alleviates these costs by removing the need for frequent and resource-intensive travel. Correctional officers can be reassigned to other critical duties within the facility, improving overall operational efficiency, reducing overtime, and allowing for a more strategic allocation of taxpayer dollars.

Further, early wake and transport times, coupled with extended holding periods, often result in undue stress and fatigue for individuals awaiting hearings. A courtroom within the jail facility allows for a more humane and efficient process, ensuring that defendants are presented before a judge in a timely manner while avoiding unnecessary distress and logistical complications. Additionally, the Department significantly reduces the risks associated with transporting people in

*Testimony of the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission
Senate Concurrent Resolution 26, Requesting the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in
planning and designing the new Oahu Community Correctional Center in Halawa, to include circuit and
district court facilities and establish a release procedure under which detainees or inmates, upon release,
are transported to a site other than residential communities or public spaces.
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custody to an external court by removing security vulnerabilities, including the potential for escape attempts and disruptions.

Lastly, the presence of a courtroom within the jail allows for expedited arraignments, bond hearings, and other legal proceedings, reducing case backlogs and ensuring swifter resolutions. Immediate access to defendants enables judges, attorneys, and court staff to process cases more efficiently, potentially fostering a more responsive and effective justice system which could lower the population of pretrial detainees in the jail system.

For the reasons noted above, the Commission supports Senate Concurrent Resolution 26. 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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SCR26 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION, IN PLANNING AND DESIGNING THE NEW OAHU COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL CENTER IN HALAWA, TO INCLUDE A CIRCUIT AND DISTRICT COURT FACILITY AND ESTABLISH A RELEASE PROCEDURE UNDER WHICH DETAINEES OR INMATES, UPON RELEASE, ARE TRANSPORTED TO A SITE OTHER THAN RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES OR PUBLIC SPACES.

Chair, Vice Chair, and Honorable Committee Members,

The Office of the Public Defender (OPD) SUPPORTS THE INTENT OF THIS RESOLUTION WITH AN AMENDMENT

As the mission of the OPD is to assist indigent defendants before all courts, our office advocates on behalf of individuals experiencing homelessness with regularity. Deputy Public Defenders represent individuals who are charged with all levels of crime, many of which intersect with mental health, addiction, and homelessness.

A courtroom at a jail, we hope, would expedite the hearings and lead to more just remedies for individuals who are housed in pretrial incarceration.

The title of this resolution is troubling. Individuals who are released from custody are not ordinarily released with conditions that bar them from being in “residential communities or public spaces.” Releasing individuals from custody in some arbitrary place after a hearing is bizarre and illegal. Most of Oahu could be considered a residential community or public space. This phrase would likely be found void for its vagueness, and a violation of a variety of constitutional issues including the first, fifth, eighth, and fourteenth amendments, and the rights against freedom of movement. We suggest deleting this language.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SCR-26

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:30:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 4/2/2025 9:31:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative.