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December 19, 2025

Via electronic submission

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, HI 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker of the House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear President Kouchi and Speaker Nakamura:

Pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution No. 160, S.D.1, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2024, the Judiciary is transmitting a copy of the *Report of the Women's Corrections Implementation Commission to Reduce the Number of Women Incarcerated at the Women's Community Correctional Center by Twenty-Five Percent by 2029*.

In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, we are also transmitting a copy of this report to the Legislative Reference Bureau Library.

The public may view an electronic copy of this report on the Judiciary's website at the following link: https://www.courts.state.hi.us/news_and_reports/reports/reports.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please feel free to contact Karen Takahashi of the Judiciary's Legislative Affairs and Special Projects Division at (808) 539-4896, or via e-mail at Karen.T.Takahashi@courts.hawaii.gov.

Sincerely,

Brandon Kimura

Brandon M. Kimura
Administrative Director of the Courts

Attachment

c: Legislative Reference Bureau Library

Report of the

**Women's Corrections Implementation Commission
to Reduce the Number of Women Incarcerated
at the Women's Community Correctional Center
by Twenty-Five Percent by 2029**

**Submitted to the
Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2026**

Pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution No. 160, S.D. 1 (2024)

**Prepared by:
The Women's Corrections Implementation Commission**

December 2025

The Women's Corrections Implementation Commission ("WCIC" or "Commission") was established by the Hawai'i State Legislature in May of 2022 and signed into law by Governor David Ige as Act 244 on July 6, 2022. The WCIC was enacted to:

- collaborate with the Judiciary and county prosecutors, develop and implement an evidence-based, gender-responsive plan to divert non-violent women offenders, especially those with minor children, from the criminal justice system;
- ensure that the recommendations made in the Final Report of the House Concurrent Resolution 85 (2016) Task Force on Prison Reform to the Legislature during the Regular Session of 2019 are implemented;
- review existing local resources and programs focused on women in the justice system for their effectiveness and capacity for expansion; and
- consider model programs that include residential, in-person and community-based rehabilitation programs, supportive and subsidized housing, restorative justice, and educational programs.

Act 244 directed that the Commission be made up of the following women members:

- the Chief Justice, or the Chief Justice's designee;
- the Director of Public Safety, or the director's designee;
- a social worker who assists in the rehabilitation and attainment of housing for female inmates, who shall be appointed by the Director of Public Safety;
- the Public Defender or the Public Defender's designee;
- the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Hawai'i, Honolulu, Maui, or Kaua'i, or the Prosecuting Attorney's designee;
- the leader of a private foundation that assists women in rehabilitation after release from prison, or the leader's designee;
- a former prison inmate appointed by the Director of Public Safety; and
- a community-based advocate appointed by the Director of Public Safety.

The Commission began its work in the summer of 2022. The members of the Commission met monthly, primarily via video conferencing. The inaugural members of each category were designated as follows:

- Designee of Chief Justice – Trish K. Morikawa;
- Designee of the Director of Public Safety – Shari Kimoto;
- Social Work – Candace P. Beale;
- Designee of the Public Defender – Hayley Cheng;

- Designees of the Prosecuting Attorney Offices -
Honolulu – Cheryl Inouye;
Hawai'i – Ha'aheo Kaho'ohalahala;
Maui – Shelly Miyashiro;
Kaua'i – Rebecca Vogt Like;
- Private Foundation Leader – Toni Bissen;
- Former Prison Inmate – Daphne Ho'okano;
- Community-Based Advocate – Linda Rich.

From 2022 to the end of 2023, the Commission focused primarily on fact finding and information gathering regarding incarcerated women at the Women's Community Correctional Center ("WCCC"). This work involved participating in a Sequential Intercept Model Mapping Workshop focused on women in the criminal justice system, convened by the Pū 'ā Foundation; touring the WCCC facility in April 2023; and conducting four kūkā kūkā (talk story) sessions with focus groups of women inmates at WCCC. Our preliminary findings identified a number of areas for improvement, including programming and services at WCCC and policies and procedures of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority.

In 2024, the WCIC continued meeting and shifted its focus to continue fact finding and information gathering regarding women on probation. Women who are unable to complete probation face five, 10 or 20 year prison sentences if their probation is revoked. The meetings in 2024 involved having conversations with the probation administrators of the four judicial circuits, former probation officers from different circuits, current First Circuit female probationers, and finally speaking with the Deputy Court Administrator of the First Circuit.

On May 1, 2024, House Concurrent Resolution No. 160, S.D. 1 was adopted, and it added requirements to the Commission. Those requirements include:

1. developing a strategy and making recommendations to reduce the number of women incarcerated at the WCCC by 25 percent by 2029;
2. working with additional departments and organizations, beyond the current members of the WCIC, including the Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Education, Hawai'i Paroling Authority, and each county police department in developing the strategy and recommendations.

In January of 2025, letters were sent to the directors of the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health, the Superintendent of the Department of Education, the Chairperson of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority, and the Chiefs of Police for all four Counties, inviting them to join in the WCIC meetings pursuant to House

Resolution 160. Based on the responses, additional individuals were added to the WCIC discussions. There were also a few staffing changes to the WCIC, and the membership as of 2025 appears as follows with the changes in bold:

- Designee of Chief Justice – Trish K. Morikawa
- Designee of the Director of Public Safety – **Sanna Munoz**,
- Social Work – Candace P. Beale
- Designee of the Public Defender – **Alison Carkin**
- Designees by the Prosecuting Attorney Offices:
 - Honolulu – Cheryl Inouye
 - Hawai'i – Ha'aheo Kaho'ohalahala
 - Maui – Shelly Miyashiro
 - Kaua'i – Rebecca Vogt Like
- Private Foundation Leader – Toni Bissen
- Former Prison Inmate – Daphne Ho'okano
- Community-Based Advocate – Linda Rich
- **Honolulu Police Department – Major Brandon Yamamoto**
- **Hawaii Paroling Authority – Gene Demello and Corey Reincke**

At the onset, the WCIC identified three distinct groups of “justice-involved women.” Those three groups were identified as: women in prison, women in jail, and women on probation. Over the past years, the WCIC has gathered information on the women in prison and the women on probation. In 2025, the WCIC shifted its focus to examine women in jail. In 2025, the WCIC met with members of the Hawai'i Substance Abuse Coalition and the Opioid Settlement Project. Additionally, the Wardens of WCCC, MCCC, and employees of those facilities have met with the WCIC to share their perspectives and highlight the needs of the women in their custody. Further conversations with employees of the other jail facilities are being planned along with potential site visits to each of the jail facilities. Once the WCIC has completed gathering relevant information on this final group, the Commission will share its findings with the additional stakeholders that did not participate in the meetings and solicit their input as the WCIC begins to develop a strategy and recommendations as requested pursuant to ACT 44 and House Resolution 160.