

# SCR 26

**ENCOURAGING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO  
CONTINUE AND EXPAND ITS STRUCTURED COMMUNITY  
PLACEMENT PROGRAMS**

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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## COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Will Espero, Chair

Sen. Roz Baker, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 12, 2013

2:45 p.m.

Room 224

## STRONG SUPPORT FOR SCR 26- COMMUNITY PLACEMENT FOR NONVIOLENT WOMEN

Aloha Chair Espero, Vice Chair Baker 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 for more than a decade. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 5,800 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars, always mindful that approximately 1,500 Hawai'i individuals are serving their sentences abroad, thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Native Hawaiians, far from their ancestral lands.

SCR 26 encourages the department of public safety to continue and expand its structured community placement programs.

As of December 31, 2012, there were 690 women under the care and custody of the Department of Public Safety, 20% who are probation or parole violators<sup>1</sup>.

A study commissioned by the Department of Public Safety in 2007<sup>2</sup> revealed that Hawai'i has been over-classifying our incarcerated population and failing to use tools that allow for community supervision, rather than imprisonment. The majority - 84% - of Hawai'i's incarcerated female population are nonviolent.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Safety Weekly Population Report, December 31, 2012

<sup>2</sup> Validation and Re-Design of the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Jail and Prison Classifications System Report, Patricia L. Hardyman, PhD, September 5, 2007.

**NON-VIOLENT SENTENCED FEMALE JAIL & PRISON INMATES BY CUSTODY**

<u>Inmates</u>	<u>Custody Level</u>	<u>Female/Jail Inmates</u>		<u>Female/Prison</u>	
		Current	Projected	Current	Projected
	Maximum	1.5%	1.5%	3.2%	1.9%
	Medium	36.1%	24.8%	30.3%	29.4%
	Minimum	62.4%	20.3%	27.6%	18.7%
	Community	NA	53.4%	38.9%	50.0%

A Community Placement program, such as the one in the proposed legislation, helps facilitate a more seamless and successful reintegration process for women transitioning from prison. It is an in-between step where women receive support and supervision as they transition from more to less structure. Women typically parole to the community facing many unforeseen challenges; even more pronounced when paroling directly from the prison environment directly to the community.

Community Placement affords women the opportunity to live in the residence they plan to parole to and "test the waters" with supervision and support as part of a structured and gradual re-integration process. This critical program addresses a gap in services for women in their re-integration process and insures a greater likelihood of success as they re-enter the community. Community Placement services for women are cost effective in that they impact the social fabric of our community by decreasing recidivism and stopping the revolving door, thus preempting the intergenerational cycle of abuse, addiction, crime and incarceration.

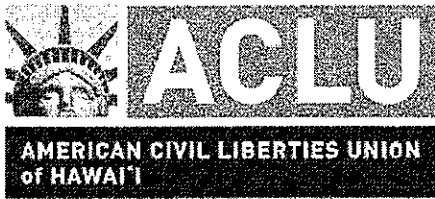
Research has clearly shown that successful re-entry programs lead to less recidivism, less crime, fewer victims, and increased public safety. Community Placement and helping restore these women's lives makes for good public safety.

Hawai'i had a community placement program for women that was sadly defunded. The women in that program accessed the services/programs from a nonprofit organization that specializes in a broad range of gender responsive services.

The cost of incarceration is \$127/day, the cost for a residential program is approximately \$100/day and the cost of structured community placement is \$50/day. This is a tremendous cost savings while affording the women, most of whom are the primary caregivers of their children, the opportunity to reconnect with their families, seek employment, and successfully transition to the community.

We all benefit from safer communities and structured community placement is an important step in this direction.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



Committee: Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, March 12, 2013, 2:45 p.m.  
Place: Conference Room 224  
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Support of S.C.R. 26,  
Relating to Community Placement Programs

Dear Chair Espero and Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii ("ACLU of Hawaii") writes in support of S.C.R. 26, Relating to Community Placement Programs.

The ACLU of Hawaii strongly supports all efforts to reduce over-incarceration and to develop a comprehensive reintegration system. To achieve these goals, we support legislation like S.C.R. 26, which seeks to transition formerly incarcerated female inmates back into society and more effectively assist their reintegration into our communities.

Female offenders are faced with significant and daunting challenges, ranging from housing obstacles to societal prejudices when attempting to reintegrate into society after incarceration. Oftentimes, experiencing unresolved sexual or physical trauma and substance abuse, women struggle with readjusting to their communities after release from incarceration. Although most female offenders are non-violent in nature and pose no risk to society, they are expected to succeed within a system that doesn't provide individual, gender-responsive services. That incarceration is not an effective method for rehabilitating substance abuse addictions further hinders their recovery and heightens the likelihood of recidivism.

The detrimental consequences of retaining and exasperating the current system are significant. Females are more likely to be repeat offenders when their substance abuse addictions are not treated, virtually guaranteed with incarceration. Furthermore, fragmented families are created when non-threatening females are denied constant access to and interaction with their children, significantly increasing the risks of inter-generational problems. Finally, current incarceration facilities require significant and unsustainable funds, which the Department of Public Safety believes will be alleviated by gender-responsive services that would realize in excess of \$280,000 per year for every ten non-violent female offenders transitioned to the re-integration program.

To ensure that eligible female offenders adjust to greater independence as seamlessly and

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Chair Espero and Members of the Committee on  
Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
March 12, 2013  
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successfully as possible, we strongly urge you to support S.C.R. 26.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Laurie Temple  
Staff Attorney and Legislative Program Director  
ACLU of Hawaii

*The American Civil Liberties Union ("ACLU") is our nation's guardian of liberty working daily in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties that the Constitution and laws of the United States guarantee everyone in this country.*

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**SCR26**

Submitted on: 3/10/2013

Testimony for PSM on Mar 12, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sandy Salmers	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support the Department of Public Safety in continuing and expanding its structured community placement programs. Thank you for your support.

**SCR26**

Submitted on: 3/10/2013

Testimony for PSM on Mar 12, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jory Watland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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**SCR26**

Submitted on: 3/10/2013

Testimony for PSM on Mar 12, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**SCR26**

Submitted on: 3/10/2013

Testimony for PSM on Mar 12, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lillian Harwood-Wakinekona	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

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**SCR26**

Submitted on: 3/11/2013

Testimony for PSM on Mar 12, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Peter Gellatly	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Mahalo for focusing on this important way to save lives and money alike!  
aloha, Peter