

House Committee on Corrections, Military & Veterans
Friday, March 19, 2021, 9:00am
Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 430/Videoconference

Testimony in Strong Support of HCR 151/HR 127

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HCR 151/HR 127**, urging the Department of Public Safety to increase its investment in comprehensive offender re-entry training programs for individuals exiting correctional facilities.

YWCA O'ahu is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. In 1900 we opened our doors to provide opportunity to women for growth, leadership and power to change. Today, over a century later, the YWCA O'ahu is the largest and oldest women's membership organization in the State of Hawaii. We are a charter member of the YWCA USA and is one of more than 200 community associations nationwide that share the mission of empowering women and eliminating racism.

As a new core of women are preparing for our future, we are committed to reinventing the YWCA for the 21st century so it remains relevant to all women as their lives and needs change. The YWCA offers a unique place – a place where women and girls can build relationships for life and have opportunities to move forward in life and give back to their community. Our three centers at the YWCA, Fernhurst, Kokokahi and Laniakea, provide valuable programs and services that develop women and girls' social, economic, leadership and community skills.

In December of 2018, the HCR 85 Task Force released its findings and final report to the legislature. In this report they stated that while they came from diverse backgrounds and viewpoints that they all agreed that "Hawaii's correctional system is not producing acceptable, cost-effective, or sustainable outcomes and needs immediate and profound change". The primary recommendation from the task force was to "begin to transition from a punitive to a rehabilitative correctional system".

YWCA's Fernhurst location is home to the State's only community-based work furlough program for women. Losing funding for this successful program would be devastating for the State and we know that once a program is lost – that it is nearly impossible to bring back. We support the urging of the Department of Public Safety to continue funding of this program and encourage increased investment so that more women can benefit from the program as well as invest into

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

O'ahu

Fernhurst YWCA

1566 Wilder Avenue
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
808.941.2231

Kokokahi YWCA

45-035 Kāne'ohe Bay Drive
Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i 96744
808.247.2124

Laniākea YWCA

1040 Richards Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
808.538.7061

ywcaoahu.org

similar programs in every county in the State as recommended by the HCR 85 Task Force on page 91 of their report.

We are also very supportive of the section urging the Department of Public Safety to comply with its statutory obligation to provide exiting offenders with civil identification documents. Without these documents, securing safe housing and employment difficult to nearly impossible thus making successful re-entry that much harder.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HCR 151/HR 127.

Jen Wilbur
Director of Advocacy
YWCA O'ahu

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

HR-127

Submitted on: 3/17/2021 6:18:45 PM

Testimony for CMV on 3/19/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha CMV Committee,

I am writing on **STRONG SUPPORT of HR127.**

Reentry planning provides incarcerated individuals with a network of support systems to help them transition back into their communities upon their release from jail or prison. These include programs that help people obtain civil identification documents, jobs, homes, healthcare, and education as they reintegrate into society. Hawai'i law requires the Department of Public Safety to develop comprehensive reentry plans for people leaving correctional facilities.

These reentry services are especially crucial now in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure safety for all people, especially the person being released.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)