

 the
**Drug Policy
Forum**
of hawaii

LATE TESTIMONY

January 28, 2010

To: Representative Faye Hanohano, Chair
Representative Henry Aquino, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Public Safety

From: Jeanne Ohta, Executive Director

Re: HB 2276 Correctional Impact Statement
Hearing: January 28, 2009, 9:45 a.m., Room 309

Position: Strong Support

The Drug Policy Forum of Hawaii writes in strong support of this measure which would require bills to amend or create new offenses, or to change probation procedures, to be accompanied by a correctional impact statement.

During the past decade, prison costs have increased dramatically due to longer prison terms; mandatory minimum sentencing policies; and more punitive drug policies. Incarceration is an extremely costly public policy, diverting funds away from other public programs like health, education, and human services.

When proposals are made that would impact the corrections populations and thus prison costs, policymaker should have that information to decide whether the benefits justify the increased costs.

On behalf of taxpayers, legislators need to know whether the proposal will make us poorer not safer. We urge you to pass this measure so that all of the facts may be considered while deliberating a costly change in public policy.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

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P.O. Box 61233
Honolulu, HI 96839

Phone: (808)-988-4386
Fax: (808) 373-7064

Email: info@dpfhi.org
Website: www.dpfhi.org

LATE TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Rep. Faye Hanohano, Chair

Rep. Henry Aquino, Vice Chair

Thursday, January 28, 2010

9:45 AM

Room 309

SUPPORT for HB 2276 - Correctional Impact Statement

I am writing in strong support of HB 2276 which requires bills to amend or create new offenses, or to change parole or probation procedures, to be accompanied by a correctional impact statement. It also requires a corrections population impact statement, tracks the ethnicity of individuals, and requires use of the Sentencing Simulation Model to determine the impact of legislation on the criminal justice system, the economy, on Hawaiians, at-risk communities, and prisons, etc.

The strength of this bill is that it would provide factual information to legislators so that they will be able to make rational, cost effective and efficient decisions. It is time to consider the human, institutional, and community impacts of corrections-related decisions. This will limit arbitrary decisions that harm individuals, families, and communities and threaten Hawaii's public safety.

Please support HB 2276.

Mahalo,

Diana Bethel
Honolulu, Hawaii