

February 16, 2010

LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Committee of Public Safety

FROM: Maelynn Paz

RE: HB415 HD1; Relating to Public Safety

Committee of Public Safety, my name is Maelynn Paz and I am currently a BSW student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am working towards my BSW and my main interest is in Public Safety. After reading up on this bill, I would like to testify in SUPPORT of HB415 HD1 relating to Public Safety.

The purpose of HB415 HD1 is that it directs the auditor to conduct a financial and management audit of the Department of Public Safety's contract with the Corrections Corporation of America. First of all, the closure of Kulani facility wasn't a good idea in my eyes. Kulani Correctional Facility was the primary location for the department's sex offender treatment program. Past programs at Kulani initially focused on assigning inmates agricultural work, specifically cultivating fruits and vegetables. Yes, it's a gateway to save money and I do understand that it will save money. The question is "Where are these sexual offenders going to get the proper treatment they need before getting back into society?" I feel that to address the closure and doing such an audit will bring many questions about other options for facilities and programs that are similar to Kulani. I feel that this bill would later lead to the helping and saving many people. Many people who engage in such criminal acts are not aware that they have a problem and how much pain they are causing.

Knowing someone that had the opportunity to go to such a facility while incarcerated has changed my perspective dealing with "correctional facilities." He is a changed man today and gives a lot of credit and thanks to Kulani. People do make mistakes and people do change. Some need the extra help and guidance in seeking such help.

I strongly support HB415 HD1 Relating to Public Safety and urge your favorable support of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Mahalo,

Maelynn Paz
479-0639
mpaz@hawaii.edu