
HOUSE RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A VETERANS COURT WITHIN THE
HAWAII STATE CIRCUIT COURT.

1 WHEREAS, the Hawaii prison system is severely overcrowded,
2 and further alternatives to incarceration are needed; and
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4 WHEREAS, judges in Hawaii have reported an increase in
5 criminal cases that involve veterans as defendants; and
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7 WHEREAS, a veteran means a person who served on active duty
8 in the armed forces of the United States, a reserve component,
9 or the national guard and was federally activated and honorably
10 discharged; and
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12 WHEREAS, research confirms that a significant number of
13 veterans return from combat with a combat-related mental health
14 condition such as post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic
15 brain injury, sexual trauma, substance abuse, or other mental
16 and emotional health conditions; and
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18 WHEREAS, veterans courts in other states across the country
19 have succeeded in turning around the lives of many veterans
20 before they enter the criminal justice system; and
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22 WHEREAS, veterans courts can assist participating veterans
23 with rehabilitation, medical care, mental health, substance
24 abuse, housing, employment services, and counseling assistance;
25 and
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27 WHEREAS, a veterans court will serve the dual purposes of
28 addressing the special needs of our State's veterans and
29 reducing crowding in the State's prisons and jails; and
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1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is the only State in the nation with the
2 presence of all five branches of the military and has a high
3 number of returning combat veterans; and
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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii is a unique venue for a veterans court to
6 succeed, given the State's military population; now, therefore,
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8 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
9 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
10 of 2012, that this body supports the establishment of a veterans
11 court within the Hawaii state circuit court; and
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
14 Resolution be transmitted to the Chief Justice of the Hawaii
15 Supreme Court, Administrative Director of the Courts, the
16 Director of Public Safety, and the Director of the Office of
17 Veterans' Services.
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