

JAN 25 2012

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## SENATE 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

3  
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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# S.R. NO. 7

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,

7  
 8 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth  
 9 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2012,  
 10 that this body supports the establishment of a veterans court  
 11 within the Hawaii state circuit court; and

12  
 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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OFFERED BY: Michelle Iudani  
*Carol Fuu Omega*  
*Anne Mervin*  
*John Papa*  
*Erzanne Chun Oakland*  


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Michelle Iudani  
  
*JW*  
Miki  
Rosey de Bal

