WHEREAS, as of November 3, 2014, there were 665 women under the care and custody of the Department of Public Safety (Department); and

WHEREAS, the Department reported that the cost of incarceration is $134 per day for each inmate; and

WHEREAS, a majority of female offenders in the State commit nonviolent crimes and do not pose a threat to the community; and

WHEREAS, the majority of incarcerated females are mothers of minor children and family fragmentation caused by a mother's incarceration increases the likelihood that her children will also be incarcerated someday; and

WHEREAS, many female offenders are reincarcerated if their recovery is not supported during their transition back into society; and

WHEREAS, Native Hawaiian women have a disproportionate representation in the State's criminal justice system making up more than 44 percent of the incarcerated female population and with higher incarceration rates than Native Hawaiian men; and

WHEREAS, recent data from the Justice Reinvestment Initiative indicate that incarceration is not an effective method for rehabilitating persons with substance abuse addictions and community-based substance abuse treatment programs are more effective than in-prison treatment; and
WHEREAS, community-based work furlough programs that assist inmates to transition back from prison to the community reduce incarceration costs, address problems associated with reentry and the high rate of recidivism, and create safer communities; and

WHEREAS, community-based work furlough programs that provide support and informed care for female offenders affected by trauma can help them break the cycle of substance abuse, crime, and incarceration; and

WHEREAS, community-based work furlough programs create an integrated and seamless resocialization and reentry process to help female inmates adjust to greater independence as they transition back into society and reunite with their children and families; and

WHEREAS, a 2012 Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report found that placement of Native Hawaiians in community-based, cultural, and trauma-informed reentry programs are effective in reducing recidivism; and

WHEREAS, Ka Hale Ho ala Hou No Na Wahine, an Oahu-based program and the only women’s community-based work furlough program in the State, has successfully transitioned female inmates in a community-based work furlough program that emphasizes a gender-responsive, culturally-sensitive, and trauma-informed framework; and

WHEREAS, two years after being released from prison, 82.4 percent of women inmates who participate in Ka Hale Ho ala Hou No Na Wahine remain integrated into society, free from prison; and

WHEREAS, accordingly, Ka Hale Ho ala Hou No Na Wahine can serve as a successful reentry model for future community-based work furlough programs; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Public Safety is encouraged to continue and expand its
structured, community-based work furlough programs to assist female inmates transition back into society; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor and the Director of Public Safety.

OFFERED BY: