

MAR 12 2021

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO CORRECT ISSUES AND
DISMANTLE BARRIERS RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF CIVIL
IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS TO AND SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY
REENTRY OF INMATES EXITING INCARCERATION.

1 WHEREAS, millions of people in the United States are living
2 with a record of an arrest or criminal conviction; and

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4 WHEREAS, people with histories of arrests and criminal
5 convictions are routinely prevented from entering into
6 employment, housing, and educational opportunities due to state
7 and local restrictions, as well as social stigma; and

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9 WHEREAS, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics,
10 ninety-five percent of people incarcerated in state prisons will
11 eventually be released into society; and

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13 WHEREAS, all individuals, including those who have been
14 convicted of and incarcerated for criminal offense, have
15 inherent worth, and those persons deserve the chance to learn
16 from their mistakes, grow, and start again; and

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18 WHEREAS, reentry programs assist people who are released
19 from jails and prisons to obtain post-secondary education,
20 housing, employment, and treatment; and

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22 WHEREAS, these reentry programs help formerly incarcerated
23 people undergo a smooth and successful transition back into
24 their communities, which results in reduced recidivism and
25 improved public safety; and

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27 WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic
28 and the resulting economic downturn have exacerbated existing
29 barriers to successful reintegration, due in part to high
30 unemployment and increased demand for housing assistance; and
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1 WHEREAS, pursuant to section 353H-3(a), Hawaii Revised
2 Statutes, the Department of Public Safety is required to develop
3 a comprehensive and effective offender reentry system plan for
4 adult offenders exiting the prison system; and

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6 WHEREAS, pursuant to section 353H-32, Hawaii Revised
7 Statutes, the Department of Public Safety is required, upon
8 request, to:

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10 (1) Issue civil identification cards to inmates exiting
11 correctional facilities; and

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13 (2) Assist those inmates in obtaining the inmates' own
14 birth certificates, social security cards, and any
15 other relevant identification documents necessary for
16 the inmates' transition from incarceration; and

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18 WHEREAS, despite section 353H-32, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
19 many inmates are exiting incarceration without identification
20 documentation; and

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22 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Public Safety's
23 December 2019 report to the Legislature, between November 2018
24 and October 2019, fifty-six percent of all people exiting jails
25 and forty-six percent of all people exiting prisons statewide
26 left without an identification card; and

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28 WHEREAS, without civil identification documents, it is
29 nearly impossible for an individual to obtain housing and legal
30 employment, both of which are essential for successful reentry
31 into the community; and

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33 WHEREAS, although state agencies face significant budget
34 cuts as a result of the economic downturn caused by COVID-19,
35 the lack of civil identification among individuals exiting
36 correctional facilities predates this downturn and should be
37 treated as priority issue; and

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39 WHEREAS, if the rate of individuals exiting correctional
40 facilities without civil identification is not reduced, those
41 released individuals without identification will be without
42 legal means to support themselves as they reenter the community,



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1 which will eventually drain state resources as the individuals
2 seek public assistance, or in some cases, backslide into
3 recidivism; and

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5 WHEREAS, the increased investment in comprehensive reentry
6 programs for former inmates reintegrating back into their
7 communities is more important now than ever and is critical to
8 improving public safety; and

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10 WHEREAS, this body is committed to ensure that, at a
11 minimum, there shall be no reductions to existing reentry
12 services or funding for contracts for reentry services; and

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14 WHEREAS, this body is committed to identifying meaningful
15 opportunities to divest from retributive approaches to
16 corrections and reinvest in reentry support; now, therefore,

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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
19 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021, the
20 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
21 Public Safety is requested to expeditiously identify and correct
22 issues that prevent the Department from complying with section
23 353H-32, Hawaii Revised Statutes, with respect to providing
24 requested civil identification cards and assistance with other
25 identification documents to individuals exiting correctional
26 facilities; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Public Safety
29 is requested to actively seek out information regarding existing
30 barriers to the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated
31 individuals into the community; and

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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Public Safety
34 is requested to work with community stakeholders to develop,
35 support, and implement policy changes that dismantle barriers
36 identified by the Department; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Public
3 Safety and Chairperson of the Hawaii Paroling Authority.

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OFFERED BY: *Clarence K. Siskiber*

