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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PRISONS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's prison  
2 system houses many more inmates than it was designed to  
3 accommodate. One reason the prison system is overburdened is  
4 that 49.6 per cent of convicted felons return to prison within  
5 one year of their release. However, forty-three per cent of  
6 inmates who seek and attain education in prison are less likely  
7 to return. Hawaii has a population of approximately five  
8 thousand six hundred inmates, costing the State about \$52,000  
9 per inmate per year. Accordingly, reducing recidivism by ten  
10 inmates will save the State approximately \$520,000 annually.

11           The legislature further finds that in order to reduce  
12 recidivism, several states have established programs that  
13 include training and mentoring to give inmates an opportunity to  
14 learn entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and business skills  
15 that will facilitate their reentry into society. For example,  
16 the Darden School of Business and the University of Virginia  
17 have partnered with the Dillwyn Correctional Center to teach



1 eligible and willing inmate students business skills that reduce  
2 recidivism. Recidivism rates in Virginia are currently  
3 approximately twenty-three per cent, one of the lowest  
4 recidivism rates in the nation. Similar programs have been  
5 established in other jurisdictions, including the District of  
6 Columbia through the Georgetown University McDonough School of  
7 Business, and New York through the Columbia Business School. An  
8 initial investment in this type of program has potential for  
9 enormous cost savings for the State.

10 The purpose of this Act is to establish a working group to  
11 create a pilot program designed to reduce recidivism by  
12 providing inmates with business and entrepreneurial skills and  
13 financial literacy education to establish a foundation for the  
14 inmates to succeed after their release from incarceration.

15 SECTION 2. (a) The department of public safety shall  
16 establish a working group that shall create a pilot program  
17 designed to reduce recidivism. The pilot program shall focus on  
18 providing inmates with business and entrepreneurial skills and  
19 financial literacy education to establish a foundation for the  
20 inmates to succeed after their release from incarceration.



1 (b) The department of public safety shall contract with an  
2 accredited post-secondary educational institution to provide  
3 incarcerated persons with high-quality instruction that meets  
4 the requirements of the pilot program created pursuant to  
5 subsection (a).

6 (c) The working group shall submit a report of its  
7 findings and recommendations, including a recommendation on  
8 whether the pilot program should be extended or made permanent  
9 and any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than  
10 twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of  
11 2025.

12 (d) The working group shall cease to exist on June 30,  
13 2025.

14 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for  
17 the pilot program established pursuant to section 2 of this Act.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
19 public safety for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



S.B. NO. 2532  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 1

**Report Title:**

PSD; Prisons; Recidivism; Working Group; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the department of public safety to establish a working group to create a pilot program designed to reduce recidivism by providing business education to inmates. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates moneys. Effective 7/1/3000.

(HD1)

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