



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i*

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Public Safety,  
Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs**

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Friday, April 21, 2017 8:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

By

Sidney Nakamoto  
Probation Administrator, First Circuit

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

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**Resolution No. and Title:** House Concurrent Resolution No. 157, House Draft 1, Requesting that the Correctional Justice Task Force Continue Its Study of Effective Incarceration Policies to Reduce the Detainee and Inmate Population While Preserving Public Safety, Lower Recidivism, and Improve Hawaii’s Correctional System.

**Judiciary's Position:**

The Judiciary strongly supports HCR 157, HD 1, which would extend the life of the Task Force created by House Concurrent Resolution No. 85, S.D.1 (2016) until 2018 and thereby allow it to better fulfill its important mandate of identifying and recommending policies and practices that will significantly reduce the cost of incarceration and improve public safety.

The HCR 85 Task Force began its work in June 2016 when it met for the first time and created five subcommittees to provide community and professional expertise in key subject areas. The five subcommittees are: (1) the Native Hawaiian subcommittee; (2) the education subcommittee; (3) the program subcommittee; (4) the design subcommittee; and (5) the faith subcommittee. The subcommittees collected relevant data on Hawaii’s correctional system, reviewed best practices in states and countries with the lowest recidivism rates, consulted with local and national correctional experts, and conducted public hearings to receive input from the community.



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In February 2017, the task force issued its preliminary report to the 2017 legislature outlining ideas on how Hawaii can transition to a correctional system that substantially reduces the cost of incarceration while significantly reducing the present level of recidivism. On February 23, 2017 the task force appeared before a joint hearing of the House and Senate to provide a briefing on the interim report. Link to the report: [http://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/HCR\\_85\\_TASK\\_FORCE\\_INTERIM\\_REPORT.pdf](http://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/HCR_85_TASK_FORCE_INTERIM_REPORT.pdf)

Four main priorities were identified: transition from a punitive to a rehabilitative correctional system through application of Hawaiian values of Aloha to all aspects of the correctional system; implementation of relevant treatment and diversion programs; establishment of an academy for training of executive branch and judiciary personnel involved in administration of incarcerated people; and the creation of a transitional coordinator to ensure implementation of the measures adopted by this legislature and the judiciary to reduce recidivism and lower the cost of incarceration.

Under the guidance and leadership of the chairs of the House and Senate public safety committees the HCR 85 Task Force has been extremely productive, yet much remains to be done, particularly in terms of projecting cost savings from our recommendations. The members of the HCR 85 Task Force welcome the opportunity to serve until 2018 and to provide a more comprehensive and complete final report in response to the important mandate the legislature has given us.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.