



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary

Representative Scott Nishimoto, Chair

Representative Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 2:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

by

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Probation Administrator, First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 691, Relating to Making Appropriations for the Veterans Treatment Court.

Purpose: Appropriates funds to the Judiciary and the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu to support the Veterans Treatment Court.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary strongly supports House Bill 691, which appropriates funds to the Judiciary to support the First Circuit's Veterans Treatment Court.

The Judiciary along with its stakeholders (Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of the Attorney General, Office of the Public Defender, and Department of the Prosecuting Attorney) have worked in collaboration with each other, to form the Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) which held its first hearing on January 4, 2013, and admitted its first clients on January 11, 2013. Currently the VTC has 24 clients participating in the program and 22 graduates since inception. The majority of these clients have multiple mental health diagnoses related to their military service and also have a long history of substance abuse and criminal behavior.

Presently the VTC has a supervisor and probation officer position that are full-time permanent positions under the Judiciary. The original grant funds of \$190,000 that has expired were expended utilizing the same service contracts as the Adult Client Services Branch (ACSB), thus creating a strain on existing resources. Measurements of success include the number of referred clients who successfully: complete the assigned treatment program (to include substance abuse and mental health), transition out of a residential treatment program (includes finding clean and sober housing and employment), and who ultimately complete the VTC successfully.



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If funds are provided through this measure, the Judiciary will use the funding to cover long-term residential treatment with a mental health component, short-term residential treatment, and housing. The cost for residential treatment is \$180 per day, \$5,580 per month, for a total of \$33,480 for a six month treatment episode at a long-term residential facility. We are requesting \$234,360 for treatment providers and an additional \$10,000 for temporary housing. Since there is more than one residential treatment program with existing purchase of service (POS) contracts with ACSB, we would not be funding individual contracts, but rather the number of treatment days to be purchased from a variety of vendors.

Some of the veterans receive some financial benefits from the VA and if a portion of those funds are used to self-pay, it is estimated that the VTC can provide adequate services with an annual treatment budget. The Judiciary is requesting support for the Veterans Treatment Court budget of \$244,360 which is part of the Judiciary's 2017-2019 Biennium Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.