

HCR 85 Correctional Task Force Minutes

Tuesday, September 25, 2018, 2 p.m.

Hawai'i Supreme Court Room 101

417 South King Street

Honolulu, HI 96797

Members Present:

The Hon. Michael Wilson, Hawai'i Supreme Court Justice, Task Force Chair

The Hon. Clarence Nishihara, Chair, Senate Committee on Public Safety,
Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

The Hon. Gregg Takayama, Chair, House Committee on Public Safety

Dwight Sakai, Administrator, Adult Client Services Branch, Hawai'i Judiciary

Robert Merce, Vice President, Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation

Matthew Taufetee, Founder and Director, First LAP (Life After Prison)

Lōpaka Baptiste, representing Colette Machado, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Office
of Hawaiian Affairs

S. Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto, Holomua Pu'uhonua Committee

Jodie Maesaka-Hirata, Deputy Director for Corrections, Department of Public Safety

I. Call to order

Justice Wilson called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the HCR 85 Task Force Meeting on July 16, 2018 were approved unanimously.

Task force members Dr. Meda Chesney-Lind and Fred Hyun emailed in their votes to approve the report.

III. Review of Draft Task Force Report

Justice Wilson reviewed the work of the task force so far and discussed next steps after the finalization of the report, namely, delivering testimony before the Legislature and creating a legislative package to advocate for in the next session.

Bob Merce explained the background and impetus for the task force and discussed each section the report chapter by chapter, crediting the various people who had contributed to the report. He explained that the task force had recognized a need to move towards a rehabilitative, rather than a punitive, model of corrections. He particularly noted sections on gender specific programming and Native Hawaiians in the correctional system. And he noted that lessons could be learned from other countries, like Norway, and other U.S. states who had reduced their prison populations.

Justice Wilson discussed the task force's desire for action to be taken on the report, and opened up the report to comment from the members of the task force and the public in attendance.

Members of the task force reiterated the desire for legislative action, discussed the opportunities and challenges ahead, noted the need for community support, shared their concerns about the report, and thanked those who helped work on the report, and particularly those who advocated for inclusion of a section on Native Hawaiians in the correctional system. Some concerns were discussed regarding people missing from the discussion, such as state agencies that would bear additional costs under a rehabilitative model.

Members of the public commented on the report, sharing their desire that it be put into action and sharing concerns about the ongoing costs of the correctional system.

IV. Approval of Draft Task Force Report

The draft task force report was approved unanimously, subject to editing by the Legislative Reference Bureau.

V. Adjournment

The Task Force decided to hold its next meeting on Friday, December 7 at 2 p.m to discuss its legislative strategy.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.