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05 April 2022

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Hearing Time: 10:30am

Location: CR211 & Virtual Videoconference

Re: HB 2309, HD2 SD1, Relating to Incarceration

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **strong support** of HB 2309, HD2 SD1, relating to incarceration. This measure will appropriate moneys for the development and maintenance of diversion, reentry, and rehabilitation services and programs by non-profit organizations in the State. It would require a report to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/3000.

This bill would shift spending focuses away from mass incarceration and toward the rehabilitation of individuals. Support programs have proven to reduce recidivism and allow a smoother transition back into the community (ACLU). We believe this measure is a very important step in the efforts to advance important services and opportunities in Hawaiʻi’s criminal system, promoting restorative justice and healing.

The Opportunity Youth Action Hui is a collaboration of organizations and individual committed to reducing the harmful effects of a punitive incarceration system for youth; promoting equity in the justice system; and improving and increasing resources to address adolescent and young adult mental health needs.

We seek to improve the continuity of programs and services for youth and young adults transitioning from minor to adult status; eliminate youth houselessness and housing market discrimination against young adults; and promote and fund more holistic and culturally-informed approaches among public/private agencies serving youth.

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