



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

**RESPONSE TO
SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 62**

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE, 2001

December 2001

January 9, 2002

The Honorable Calvin K. Y. Say, Speaker
And Members of the House of Representatives
Twenty-First State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Mr. Speaker and Members of the House:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 62, S.D.1, H. D. 1 requests that the Department of Public Safety, in consultation with the Department of the Attorney General, the Prosecuting Attorney of each County, the Police Department of each County, and private groups such as the Ohana H'opakele, implement programs of restorative justice and establish wellness centers to reduce the rate of incarceration and increase opportunities for inmate rehabilitation, particularly among native Hawaiians.

The Department of Public Safety supports the intent of this resolution which ably presents the rationale behind promoting programs that contribute to resolving crime on a broader basis than just punishment of offenders. However, our limited resources prohibit us from carrying out the actions requested.

This Resolution requests that we review and implement alternatives to transferring inmates to mainland correctional facilities. We do not have much choice in this matter. The inmates who are on the mainland have been sentenced to prison terms for felonies. There are four facilities in Hawaii that focus on these offenders. Each of them is filled to capacity. The Halawa Correctional Facility, the only facility in Hawaii capable of housing medium and close custody male inmates, is about 200 inmates over its maximum capacity. We would welcome alternatives, so long as they are appropriate for the population. That is why we support proposals for medium and minimum-security treatment facilities.

The Department has always advocated for expanded treatment options and alternatives to incarceration for those offenders that are eligible and that can benefit from these kinds of programs. To this end, we proposed funding for treatment

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programs for qualified offenders on pre-trial release, probation and parole. Such programs reduce the rate of incarceration and increase opportunities for rehabilitation for all offenders.

The department has also supported establishing restorative justice programs and wellness centers to reduce the rate of incarceration and increase opportunities for inmate rehabilitation. We presently participate in the group convened by the Department of the Attorney General to expand restorative justice programs in the State. Hawaii County has already made much progress in this area and is an example of what can be accomplished when the criminal justice system works hand-in-hand with the community. We are also interested in promoting wellness centers as community and culturally based alternatives to incarceration.

The Department supports the intent of SCR 62, H.D.1, S.D. 1 and respectfully recommends that the Legislature review the contents of this resolution and considers assigning this task to the Legislative Reference Bureau for further study.

Please feel free to contact me at 587-1350 if you have any questions or concerns. Your consideration is very much appreciated.

Very truly yours,

/s/
TED SAKAI
Director

January 9, 2002

The Honorable Robert Bunda, President
And Members of the Senate
Twenty-First State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 003
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 62, S.D.1, H. D. 1 requests that the Department of Public Safety, in consultation with the Department of the Attorney General, the Prosecuting Attorney of each County, the Police Department of each County, and private groups such as the Ohana H'opakele, implement programs of restorative justice and establish wellness centers to reduce the rate of incarceration and increase opportunities for inmate rehabilitation, particularly among native Hawaiians.

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The department has also supported establishing restorative justice programs and wellness centers to reduce the rate of incarceration and increase opportunities for inmate rehabilitation. We presently participate in the group convened by the Department of the Attorney General to expand restorative justice programs in the State. Maui County has already made much progress in this area and is an example of what can be accomplished when the criminal justice system works hand-in-hand with the community. We are also interested in promoting wellness centers as community and culturally based alternatives to incarceration.

The Department supports the intent of SCR 62, H.D.1, S.D. 1 and respectfully recommends that the Legislature review the contents of this resolution and considers assigning this task to the Legislative Reference Bureau for further study.

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