



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs  
And  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.  
By  
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### SB 2640 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

Chairs Nishihara and Kim, Vice Chairs DeCoite and Kidani, and members of the committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2640, relating to the appropriation of funds for the second year of a program to train incarcerated women to be general education development tutors for their peers, provide college correspondence courses for women in the women's community correctional center, and provide reentry and transition services for women wanting to continue their education post incarceration.

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of SB 2640 (companion to House Bill 1779) and upholds the value of the current program. This bill appropriates additional funds for the Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice to support their efforts to continue to provide for the second year of their education program for imprisoned women. The UH supports the program and its intent. Windward Community College (Windward CC) has taken the primary lead on this initiative and is partnering with Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice in this educational effort.

Education is the most effective strategy known for preventing recidivism. Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice's work is helping not only the female incarcerated population but their families, their communities, and our State by providing more effective rehabilitation, advocacy, resources and skills to support these women upon release. Their support provides a foundation for enrollees so that their lives can have meaning and they can (re-)build families and careers.

Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice helps women complete their GED, making them eligible for Windward CC's program, utilizing a peer tutoring model that builds pride and agency in the tutors while supporting GED students. Once these women have completed their GED, Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice has helped facilitate planning for Windward CC to partner with University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Social Sciences to support students in their transition to the baccalaureate degree program.

The ability for Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice to provide support in recruiting and enrolling students, primarily upon GED completion, and provide tuition for students to take courses can help Windward CC continue in an environment where higher education has not traditionally thrived.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the intent of SB 2640.