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**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION**  
**E HUIKALA A MA'EMA'E NŌ**  
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TO: The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair  
The Honorable Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair  
Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: House Bill 2288, House Draft 1, Relating to Parole Eligibility  
Hearing: Wednesday, February 25, 2026; 2:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 325

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) submits **comments** on House Bill 2288, House Draft 1, relating to parole eligibility, which amends section 353-64, HRS, to require participation in work furlough, if recommended, for parole eligibility.

Although the Commission appreciates the House Draft 1 amendments to allow the Hawaii Paroling Authority (HPA) to waive program participation requirements, the Commission is still concerned that this bill will only keep more people incarcerated as *access* to furlough and programming has been a consistent issue within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR).

In March 2025, the Commission released its first inaugural report, [Hoe Amau](#), on the current state of reentry in Hawaii. This report specifically covered the Department's compliance with Chapter 353H *Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program* of Hawaii Revised Statutes. The Commission determined that the DCR was in compliance with 21 sections, mostly in compliance with 11 sections, mostly not in compliance with 18 sections and not in compliance with 51 sections of Chapter 353H. The Department's lack of compliance resulted in weak or missing reentry planning for the population, gaps in required services and programs, identification and documentation access failures (state IDs, birth certificates, social security cards), poor performance tracking, staffing and capacity shortfalls, and higher risk of failed reintegration. All of these deeply impact the incarcerated population at no fault of their own.

Additionally, the Commission has consistently found that furlough is severely underutilized and people who are currently eligible to be placed in furlough remain at higher level facilities. As of January 28, 2026, there were sixty individuals classified as Community status who were housed in Halawa Correctional Facility, Waiawa Correctional Facility, or Kulani Correctional Facility –

none of which have furlough. Additionally, there were 238 individuals classified as Minimum custody who were housed in higher level facilities (not minimum facilities as required by policy). Since individuals cannot progress to furlough without spending time at a minimum facility, this again highlights how the disregard for policy and law can deeply impact an individual's access to programming and furlough activities, even if they are eligible for such opportunities. If the Department does not provide access, reentry integration will not be successful.

Should you have additional questions, the Oversight Coordinator, Christin Johnson, can be reached at 808-849-3580 or at [christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov](mailto:christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to testify.