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STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
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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 2413, Relating to Pretrial Reform
Hearing: Thursday, February 19, 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) **supports** House Bill 2413, relating to pretrial reform which requires courts to release most people charged with low-level, nonviolent offenses without bail unless there is a clear risk to public safety or flight, while ensuring judicial oversight, prompt hearings if bail cannot be paid, and victim notification.

The consequences of unnecessary incarceration and unaffordable bail are not theoretical as they directly contribute to severe overcrowding in Hawai'i's jails, particularly at the Hawai'i Community Correctional Center (HCCC) where many individuals are confined not due to public safety risk, but due to financial hardship. Overcrowding at HCCC strains correctional staff, reduces access to rehabilitative programming, increases operational costs, and worsens health and safety conditions for both incarcerated individuals and employees. HB2413 addresses this by prioritizing release on recognizance for eligible nonviolent offenses, ensuring detention is reserved for cases involving genuine safety or flight risks rather than financial limitations.

Reducing unnecessary pretrial detention is one of the most immediate and effective ways to alleviate jail overcrowding while maintaining community safety. This approach promotes more efficient use of correctional resources, allowing facilities and staff to focus on individuals who pose greater risks. HB2413 also maintains important safeguards by preserving judicial discretion to impose detention when warranted and requiring ongoing review of those decisions.

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