



Proclamation

Because of the harmful effects substance abuse has on individuals and society, government agencies have worked diligently to reduce drug use in our neighborhoods by targeting both supply and demand. Many drug-users have faced challenges in ending their addictions, which has spurred the creation of numerous valuable rehabilitation programs. Among these are drug courts, a specialized legal court which offers non-violent offenders the opportunity to enter a rehabilitation program instead of serving a prison sentence. These courts provide an effective solution to drug-related crime through the innovative use of comprehensive supervision, drug testing, judicial monitoring, sanctions and incentives.

Hawai'i's first drug court was established on O'ahu in 1996, and its success has led to the expansion of five additional courts located in all four counties, dealing with both juveniles and families. Program participants undergo an intense regimen of substance abuse and mental health treatment, case management, drug testing and probation supervision, in addition to regularly-scheduled status hearings before a judge with expertise in the drug court system. After successful completion of the program, the criminal records of the graduate can be expunged.

Over the last 11 years, the drug court program has produced many benefits for the State of Hawai'i. Drug courts have been shown to reduce relapse and other criminal behavior during and after rehabilitation, as well as relieve prison overcrowding and generate cost savings by trimming jail terms and decreasing the number of inmates. The most important benefit, however, is the numerous individual success stories of former substance abusers who have overcome their addictions and successfully rejoined their families and society.

Each May, communities across the nation observe *National Drug Court Month* in order to celebrate the drug court program's positive impact on our neighborhoods and their success in ensuring non-violent offenders receive the treatment they need.

THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR., Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim **May 2007** as

STATE DRUG COURT MONTH

in Hawai'i, and strongly encourage our citizens to recognize the impact these courts have in our state and support those currently in recovery.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this third day of May 2007.

Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai'i

James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i