DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

News Release

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DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DETAILS PLAN TO REACTIVATE KULANI CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

HONOLULU – The Department of Public Safety (PSD) today released a draft environmental assessment that proposes a plan to reactivate the Kulani Correctional Facility in Hilo.

This plan would allow the return of 200 minimum-security male inmates who have two to four years remaining before they are eligible for parole or release. It also calls for the addition of 96 required staff at Kulani, and details some minor repairs and upgrades around the 280-acre facility, including kitchen equipment and electrical work.

"This assessment is the first of many steps we need to take in order to reopen Kulani," said Public Safety Interim Director Ted Sakai. "We are not going to rush the process. We will proceed correctly, with careful thought and consideration for the community."

The next step is to invite community input. The public will have 60 days to comment on the assessment. PSD will conduct a series of public meetings across the Big Island to discuss the draft assessment and gather comments.

The proposed reactivation is consistent with Hawaii's participation in the Justice Reinvestment Initiative which began over a year ago. The JRI strategy is a "data-driven" plan to reduce spending on corrections, reinvest savings generated in strategies that would reverse recent crime trends and eventually bring out-of-state prisoners back to Hawaii.

A copy of the full draft environmental assessment is on the Department of Public Safety website at www.hawaii.gov/psd.

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