

LIFESTYLE // GUEST COLUMN



CrimeStoppers, HOPE Partners

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Judge Steven Alm

Hello, *MidWeek* reader. Thank you for checking out Hawaii's Most Wanted, a weekly feature in *MidWeek* that identifies defendants who are not complying with the rules of the criminal justice system.

My name is Steven Alm. I am a Circuit Court judge in Honolulu and the creator of Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement, or HOPE probation.

I want to thank *MidWeek*, Sgt. Kim Buffett of HPD, and the whole team at CrimeStoppers and Hawaii's Most Wanted for identifying and assisting law enforcement in locating people who either don't show up for trial or are in violation of their probation.

You may have noticed that many of the people identified in this space are wanted on HOPE probation warrants. You may wonder if that means that HOPE doesn't work.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

HOPE is working very well here and has been adopted in 18 other states.

HOPE is tougher than probation as usual. In HOPE, we impose a jail sentence for each and every violation of probation.

But HOPE needs to be tough. Meth is tough. Criminal thinking is tough. By imposing swift, certain, consistent and proportionate jail sentences every

time, HOPE helps offenders connect their bad behavior with consequences and learn from it.

HOPE is Parenting 101.

Top-quality research from Pepperdine University and UCLA has shown that compared to a control group of probation as usual, offenders on HOPE were 72 percent less likely to use drugs, 55 percent less likely to get arrested for a new crime, and served or were sentenced to 48 percent fewer days in state prison.

That's why HPD, the sheriffs and the U.S. marshals are such big supporters of HOPE.

We currently have more than 2,200 felony offenders in HOPE. While most are doing well and are complying with the rules of probation, there always will be a small number who do not.

MidWeek and Hawaii's Most Wanted have been very helpful in publicizing those offenders who run away and help get them arrested.

This publicity is very helpful. Often, family members will call the police or sheriffs to get their loved ones arrested. It is better to get arrested on a warrant than arrested for a new crime.

Sometimes probationers will see their own picture in *MidWeek* and turn themselves in.

The entire HOPE team, including the courts, probation, prosecutors, defense attorneys, corrections, treatment and law enforcement, are working together to make HOPE a success.

HOPE reduces victimization and new crimes, helps offenders to stay out of prison and saves taxpayers millions of dollars.

Thank you, *MidWeek* and Hawaii's Most Wanted!