

---

---

# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO STUDY THE ISSUE OF AUTHORIZING PSYCHOLOGISTS WHO HAVE OBTAINED THE APPROPRIATE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE TO PRESCRIBE A LIMITED FORMULARY OF PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATIONS FOR THE TREATMENT OF MENTAL ILLNESS WHILE PRACTICING IN FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS OR LICENSED HEALTH CLINICS LOCATE IN FEDERALLY DESIGNATED MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED AREAS OR IN MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS.

1           WHEREAS, it has been stated by proponents of legislation  
2 proposing to confer prescriptive authority on clinical  
3 psychologists that there are not enough psychiatrists available  
4 to serve patients at federally qualified health centers in the  
5 State; and

6  
7           WHEREAS, at the same time, there appear to be certain  
8 barriers to the hiring of psychiatrists at these federally  
9 qualified health centers; and

10  
11           WHEREAS, it has been suggested by proponents of legislation  
12 proposing to confer prescriptive authority on clinical  
13 psychologists that, under certain conditions relating to  
14 obtaining appropriate education, training, and experience,  
15 clinical psychologists may be qualified to prescribe  
16 medications; and

17  
18           WHEREAS, this view is strongly contradicted by those who  
19 believe that prescriptive authority to treat mental illness  
20 carries with it many inherent dangers to the health, safety, and  
21 well being of the public if that prescriptive authority is not  
22 retained and exercised only by medically trained and qualified  
23 psychiatrists; and

24  
25           WHEREAS, these competing views need to be carefully  
26 examined; and



1 WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the health, safety, and  
2 well-being of the State to examine the pros and cons of the  
3 debate regarding the appropriateness of conferring prescriptive  
4 authority on clinical psychologists to treat mental illness in  
5 the State; now, therefore,  
6

7 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-third  
8 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2006, the  
9 House of Representatives concurring, that the Legislative  
10 Reference Bureau is requested to study the issue of authorizing  
11 psychologists who have obtained the appropriate education,  
12 training, and experience to prescribe a limited formulary of  
13 psychotropic medications for the treatment of mental illness,  
14 while practicing in federally qualified health centers or  
15 licensed health clinics located in federally designated  
16 medically underserved areas or in mental health professional  
17 shortage areas; and  
18

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference  
20 Bureau is requested to include in its study:  
21

- 22 (1) A comparison of requisite educational requirements of  
23 psychologists versus psychiatrists, advanced practice  
24 nurse practitioners at the prescriptive level,  
25 optometrists, podiatrists, and physicians' assistants  
26 for what prescriptive authority they have and what  
27 medications they are allowed to prescribe, if any, and  
28 under what supervision;  
29
- 30 (2) Evidence of patient safety where psychologists  
31 prescribe psychotropic medications or are responsible  
32 for the management of patient care that includes  
33 psychotropic medications;  
34
- 35 (3) Trends in other states concerning conferring limited  
36 prescriptive authority on certain psychologists;  
37
- 38 (4) A review of the arguments in support and in opposition  
39 to conferring limited prescriptive authority on  
40 certain psychologists;  
41
- 42 (5) A review and description of barriers or obstacles, if  
43 any, to the hiring of psychiatrists at federally  
44 qualified health centers, such as the number of



1 positions available, the funding available, the  
2 availability of psychiatrists to fill these positions,  
3 and the possible solutions to removing such barriers  
4 or obstacles; and

- 5  
6 (6) A review of the program operated by the United States  
7 Department of Defense authorizing certain  
8 psychologists to prescribe a limited formulary of  
9 psychotropic medications, including a review of any  
10 evaluations for the program or statistics that might  
11 be available; and

12  
13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Primary Care  
14 Association, the Hawaii Psychological Association, and the  
15 Hawaii Psychiatric Medical Association are requested to  
16 designate representatives authorized to speak on behalf of the  
17 organization who may be consulted by the Bureau with respect to  
18 the issues in this study, provided that the Bureau shall not be  
19 limited to consulting only with these representatives; and

20  
21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference  
22 Bureau is further requested to review experiences and studies in  
23 Hawaii and other states, including but not limited to Louisiana,  
24 New Mexico, and New York, that may have passed legislation  
25 allowing psychologists to prescribe, including problems relating  
26 to misdiagnosis and treatment of patients as a result of  
27 allowing psychologists to prescribe various medications; and

28  
29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference  
30 Bureau is requested to report its findings and recommendations  
31 to the Legislature not later than twenty days prior to the  
32 convening of the Regular Session of 2007; and

33  
34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
35 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Acting Director of  
36 the Legislative Reference Bureau, the Chairperson of the Board  
37 of Psychology, the Chairperson of the Board of Medical  
38 Examiners, the Director of Health, and the Executive Directors  
39 of the Hawaii Primary Care Association, the Hawaii Psychological  
40 Association, and the Hawaii Psychiatric Medical Association.

