

Honolulu, Hawaii

Apr. 14, 2006

RE: S.B. No. 2297
S.D. 1

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2006
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which
was referred S.B. No. 2297, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to improve regulation of mental
health counselors by:

- (1) Clarifying that the practice of mental health counseling
is the rendering of professional counseling services
based on specialized education, training, and
experience;
- (2) Codifying the regulatory practice of exempting the
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' registered
rehabilitation specialists from mental health counselor
license requirements;
- (3) Clarifying that the required intern and post graduate
experience is to be completed in the area of "mental
health" counseling and specifying appropriate
supervisors for that experience;



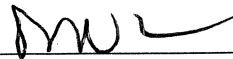
- (4) Aligning the time limit on completion of post-graduate experience with national licensing standards by changing the time limit for completion of post-graduate experience from two years to not less than two years; and
- (5) Limiting the time for completion of post-graduate experience to not more than four years, consistent with similar mental health professions.

The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Alliance for Professional Counselor Licensure, Hawaii Rehabilitation Counseling Association, Kaiser Permanente, and several concerned individuals supported this bill.

Your Committee finds that this bill will benefit consumers of mental health services by ensuring that licensed mental health counselors have received appropriate training and experience for the services that they provide.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2297, S.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce,



ROBERT N. HERKES, Chair



