

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1336

Honolulu, Hawaii

March 21, 2007

RE: S.B. No. 1728  
S.D. 1

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2007  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health, to which was referred S.B. No. 1728, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO A TWO-YEAR HEPATITIS C  
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to provide funding for a two-year demonstration project for intervention and treatment of hepatitis C.

More specifically, the appropriation helps to create a demonstration project at the Waikiki Health Center and the West Hawaii Community Health Center that includes testing, case management, and treatment of hepatitis C.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Waikiki Health Center, the Hepatitis Prevention, Education, Treatment & Support Network of Hawaii, the Philippine Nurses Association-Hawaii, the United Filipino Council of Hawaii, the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc., the National Federation of Filipino American Associations, the Congress of Visayan Organizations, the Oahu Filipino Community Council, the Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness Research and Training, the Hawaii Disability Rights Center, one medical doctor, and four individuals.



The Department of Health offered comments on the measure. Your Committee recognizes the Department of Health's concerns that:

- (1) The number of patients receiving hepatitis C services is uncertain;
- (2) There are no funds appropriated to the Department of Health although the Department will be administering and coordinating the demonstration project; and
- (3) Although two specific healthcare sites have been selected, the Department of Health would still be required to use an open and competitive procurement process before it can use funds for those sites.

Your Committee finds that hepatitis C is a serious disease that leads to the death of approximately ten thousand to twelve thousand people nationwide. In addition, your Committee finds that Hawaii has the highest rate of liver cancer in the nation due to a high rate of chronic viral hepatitis C. More than fifteen thousand people have tested positive for hepatitis C in Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that this measure seeks to help address this problem by funding a two-year demonstration project for hepatitis C at two healthcare centers to provide testing, case management, treatment, surveillance, research, and outcome assessments.

Your Committee further notes that early testing, intervention, and treatment is more successful and highly cost effective, compared to extensive, expensive, and often unsuccessful treatment required after a person becomes ill from hepatitis C.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1728, S.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Finance.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Health,



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JOSHUA B. GREEN, M.D., Chair



