

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 212

Honolulu, Hawaii

Feb 9, 2007

RE: H.B. No. 1119

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 H.B. No. 1119  
entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO RURAL PRIMARY HEALTHCARE AND  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SHORT-TERM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to increase access to primary  
care physicians in rural areas of the State that are medically  
underserved.

Specifically, the measure makes an appropriation to:

- (1) Stabilize the rural primary health care services  
provided on Oahu by the University of Hawaii John A.  
Burns School of Medicine Department of Family Medicine  
and Community Health through its family medicine  
residency program; and
- (2) Expand workforce development in the county of Hawaii by  
developing a Hawaii island family medicine rural  
training track to provide additional opportunities for  
family physician training.

The State Health Planning and Development Agency, the  
Department of Family Medicine and Community Health of the John A.  
Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii, Hawaii  
Medical Service Association, Hawaii Health Systems, Hawaii Pacific  
Health, and the Hawaii Psychiatric Medical Association submitted

HB1119 HSCR LRB 07-2092.doc



testimony in support of the measure. The Department of Health and the John A. Burans School of Medicine of the University of Hawaii submitted testimony in support of the intent of the measure.

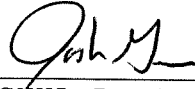
Your Committee recognizes that areas of the State are federally designated as medically underserved areas and health professions shortage areas. Additionally, residents in some areas comprise a federally designated medically underserved population. Because of the shortage of physicians in these generally rural areas, access to affordable health care is difficult, if not impossible. A family practice residency program that includes training and experience in rural primary health care would train future family physicians to provide appropriate care to medically underserved rural residents in a medically appropriate and culturally sensitive manner.

Currently, the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii at Manoa offers a three-year residency program in family medicine, the only civilian family medicine program in the State. Federal funding through the Centers for Medicare and Medicare Services provided the initial financial support for a rural health care demonstration project, established in 2006 in Hilo, which gives family medicine residents training and experience in rural health care. In addition, the demonstration project served to provide health care for medically underserved residents of Hawaii. Permanent rural health care training programs in rural areas of neighbor islands would not only provide workforce development opportunities, but they also would increase health care options for the medically underserved residents of those rural areas.

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 H.B. No. 1119 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Higher Education.



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



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JOSHUA B. GREEN, M.D., Chair



