

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 715

Honolulu, Hawaii

Feb 16, 2007

RE: H.B. No. 1448

H.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 H.B. No. 1448
entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH CARE ZONES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a joint advisory
working group to address physician shortage conditions in the
State by offering recommendations to resolve the shortage.

Specifically, the measure directs the working group to review
physician densities in the State and designate three health care
zones according to each zone's adequate, shortage, or critical
physician shortage condition. The working group is also directed
to submit recommendations on alleviating the physician shortage
conditions to the Legislature, the Governor, and the public.

The Department of Health submitted comments on the bill.

Your Committee finds that healthcare shortages exist in many
areas of the State and notes that there are federally designated
health care professional shortage areas in all counties of the
State, as noted in the Department of Health's testimony. After an
area is designated as a health professional shortage area by the
federal government, the area becomes eligible for various federal
benefits intended to ease the health care professional shortage.
The federal designation is based in part upon provider to
population ratios, unlike the determination of physician shortages




by density, as mandated by the bill. Your Committee believes this measure will enhance other existing initiatives that are focusing on increasing access to health care providers for the medically underserved in the State.

Your Committee has amended the measure by:

- (1) Adding the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Center for Nursing, University of Hawaii, as a member of the joint advisory working group; and
- (2) Changing the effective date to January 1, 2050, to facilitate further discussion on the measure.

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. 1448, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1448, H.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Finance.

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



JOSHUA B. GREEN, M.D., Chair



