

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3276

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 01 2008

RE: H.B. No. 2727
H.D. 2
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2008
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and
Affordable Housing, to which was referred H.B. No. 2727, H.D. 2,
S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH INSURANCE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to ensure that children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders have access to quality health care services and treatment by establishing a temporary autism disorders spectrum benefits and coverage task force to research the problems faced by parents of children with autism and what can be done to ensure that proper benefits and services are provided through public and private resources to address the special needs of children with autism, including providing services involving applied behavioral analyses techniques.

Testimony in support of this measure was submitted by the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Kaiser Permanente Hawaii, the Hawaii Disability Rights Center, and two private individuals. Testimony in opposition to this measure was submitted by the Department of Health.

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that impairs a person's ability to communicate and relate to others, and is often associated with repetitive behavior, poor eye contact, and rigidity in routines. Children with autism often have co-occurring conditions that require special services from trained

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medical professionals and a full range of therapies. Autism is a treatable condition and with proper medical intervention and intensive therapies children with autism can improve to such an extent that they can enter into mainstream classrooms unassisted. Unfortunately, children with autism are often denied coverage for necessary therapies by private insurance companies, which can further delay their ability to speak and communicate. Your Committee finds that establishing a temporary autism disorders spectrum benefits and coverage task force will ensure that children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders have access to quality health care services and treatment.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Affordable Housing that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2727, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Commerce, Consumer
Protection, and Affordable
Housing,



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, Chair



