

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1228

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 09 2009

RE: H.B. No. 1362
H.D. 1
S.D. 2

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2009
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred H.B. No. 1362, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO GENETIC COUNSELORS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require licensure for individuals offering genetic counseling services in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, to protect consumers of genetic counseling, and to assure the availability of high quality genetic counseling services.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Kapiolani Medical Center and four private citizens. Testimony in opposition to this measure was received from the Department of Health. Written testimony presented to the Committee may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

Your Committee finds that genetic counselors are uniquely trained allied health professionals who provide services including assessment for risk of genetic disease and psychosocial support for patients who are at-risk of or carriers of genetic disease. The use of genetic information in applied medicine is very recent, and the field has expanded rapidly since the completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003. The rapid advances in both scientific understanding of human genetics and biomedical techniques often present a challenge to practicing health care providers in maintaining up-to-date knowledge. Your Committee



finds that licensure of genetic counselors will allow the State to enforce high standards for training, ethics, and continuing education among practitioners.

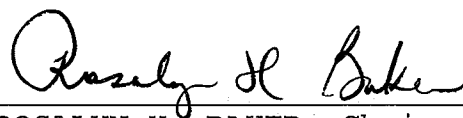
Your Committee further finds that the Department of Health's Genetics Program is an established entity with years of experience in clinical genetics service provision, genetics policy development, and public health genetics. Especially considering the small number of genetic counselors currently practicing in Hawaii, the licensing and oversight of genetic counselors fits seamlessly into the Department of Health Genetics Program's current responsibilities.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing its effective date to July 1, 2011; provided that section -3(2) and section -16 of the new chapter established by section 2 of the measure shall take effect upon approval; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive changes for the purposes of clarity and accuracy.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1362, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1362, H.D. 1, S.D. 2.

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



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



