

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1506

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 07 2017

RE: H.B. No. 916
H.D. 1
S.D. 2

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2017
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Ways and Means, to which was referred H.B. No. 916, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Department of Health to address the shortage of primary healthcare providers in Hawaii.

More specifically, this measure appropriates funds to support the Hawaii Rural Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine to provide loan repayment for physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners who agree to work in a federally-designated health professional shortage area or an area of Hawaii found to be underserved.

Your Committee received written comments in support of this measure from the Department of Health; Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; University of Hawaii; East Hawaii Region of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation; Office of the Mayor, County of Hawaii; Hawaii Academy of Family Physicians; Healthcare Association of Hawaii; Lanai Community Health Center; Big Island Toyota; Hawaii Pacific Health; Hawaii Medical Service Association;




Hawaii Medical Association; Hilo Medical Center Foundation; The Queen's Health Systems; ILWU Local 142; Hawaii Area Health Education Center; and sixteen individuals.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii is facing a shortage of primary health care providers, particularly in rural areas, that threatens individual health and cumulatively affect the State's health care costs. Your Committee further finds that the increasingly high cost of education for health care professionals binds graduates to a career path focused on pursuing an income to repay exorbitant student loans, rather than pursuing general practice on neighbor islands or in rural areas where the need is greatest. Your Committee believes it is important to provide funds to the Hawaii Rural Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine to address the need for physicians in underserved areas of the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by adding an appropriation of an unspecified amount for fiscal year 2018-2019.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Ways and Means that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 916, 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. 916, H.D. 1, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Ways and Means,



JILL N. TOKUDA, Chair



