

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16 2017

RE: S.B. No. 735

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

Sir:

Your Committees on Higher Education and Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health, to which was referred S.B. No. 735 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE HAWAII HEALTH CORPS PROGRAM,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to fund the Hawaii health corps program under the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii at Manoa to provide loan repayment for physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, psychologists, and social workers who agree to work in a federally designated health professional shortage area or an area of Hawaii found to be underserved.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Hawai'i System, Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, Hawaii Medical Association, AlohaCare, 'Ohana Health Plan, Lāna'i Community Health Center, Hawaii Medical Service Association, Hawai'i Pacific Health, Hawai'i Academy of Family Physicians, and sixteen individuals.

Your Committees find that Hawaii is facing a shortage of over five hundred doctors, and that this shortage threatens the health of Hawaii residents and cumulatively affects the State's healthcare costs. Your Committees further find that access to care in rural and underserved areas of Hawaii and in underserved populations such as the native Hawaiian population is especially

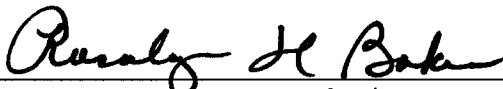


concerning, as these areas have been the most significantly affected by the shortage of primary and behavioral healthcare providers.

Your Committees recognize the increasingly high education costs for healthcare professionals and the need for the State to make efforts to attract healthcare professionals to practice in Hawaii. The average medical student debt for indebted graduates is \$160,000, and debt plays a large role in career decisions which subsequently impacts the supply of the State's physicians. Your Committees find that medically underserved populations also find it hard to compete with higher paying specialty positions that are usually found in urban areas.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Higher Education and Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 735 and recommend that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committees on Higher Education  
and Commerce, Consumer  
Protection, and Health,



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



KAIALI I. KAHELE Chair





