

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 17 2017

RE: S.B. No. 823

S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health,
to which was referred S.B. No. 823 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIANS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to require insurers, mutual benefit societies, fraternal benefit societies, and health maintenance organizations to provide coverage for health care services provided by a naturopathic physician.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Medical Service Association, Hawaii Society of Naturopathic Physicians, American Association of Naturopathic Physicians, and twenty-nine individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from Kaiser Permanente Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that naturopathic physicians may be excluded from insurance contracts in Hawaii, which forces patients who choose a naturopathic physician as their primary care provider to pay out of pocket for their primary care needs. This measure requires health insurers, mutual benefit societies, fraternal benefit societies, and health maintenance organizations to provide parity of coverage for health care services provided by a naturopathic physician. Furthermore, your Committee notes that section 2706 of the federal Public Health Service Act, as added by



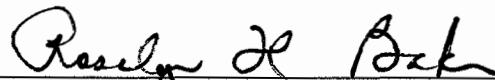
section 1201 of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, prohibits insurers from discriminating against any health care provider, such as a naturopathic physician, who is acting within the scope of that provider's license or certification. Amendments to this measure are necessary to ensure that the Insurance Commissioner is able to receive and investigate complaints relating to discrimination against a health care provider.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Requiring the Insurance Commissioner to receive and investigate complaints regarding discrimination with respect to participation under a health insurance plan against any health care provider, pursuant to section 2706 of the Public Health Service Act; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 823, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 823, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

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



ROSALYN N. BAKER, Chair



