

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

765

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 28 2019

RE: S.B. No. 1243  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirtieth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2019  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health, to which was referred S.B. No. 1243 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to update definitions and terminology related to the State newborn hearing screening program and mandate reporting of diagnostic audiologic evaluation results to the Department of Health to improve appropriate follow-up for infants identified as deaf or hard of hearing.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Health, Disability and Communication Access Board, O'ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from Kaiser Permanente Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that under existing law, the State newborn hearing screening program is unable to routinely access diagnostic audiologic evaluation results. Identifying and following up with families of infants who are deaf, or hard of hearing are especially important in Hawaii, as data show the incidence of infants who are born deaf or hard of hearing in the State is about twice the incidence in other States. Missing diagnostic audiologic evaluation results also cause great delay



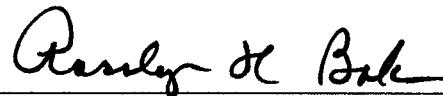
for entry into much-needed early intervention services. Enrollment in early intervention services is critical for deaf or hard of hearing children to develop language and social skills and increase school readiness.

Your Committee notes that the provision of all audiological reports to the Department of Health is not the purpose of this measure. Rather, only the diagnostic audiologic reports related to follow-up of newborns who did not pass newborn hearing screening or when an infant's hearing status changes need to be provided to the Department of Health. These reports will enable the Department to follow up with parents in an appropriate and timely manner with the goal of increasing awareness of and access to early intervention options.

Your Committee has amended this measure by 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. 1243, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1243, S.D. 1, and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

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



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ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



