

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 05 , 2020

RE: H.B. No. 1891
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirtieth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2020
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred H.B. No. 1891 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to reestablish and fund one full-time equivalent permanent veterinary medical officer position within the Department of Health.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association and Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Health.

Your Committee finds that the health of humans and animals are inextricably related, a concept that is recognized as the "One Health" approach. Your Committee further finds that physicians and veterinarians need to interact and communicate on health issues, particularly with zoonotic diseases that are caused by infection from viruses, bacteria, parasites, or fungi, and can spread between animals and humans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that zoonotic diseases are very common and every year tens of thousands of Americans will get sick from them.



Your Committee further finds that previously the Department of Health had a public health veterinarian position that was filled by a doctor of veterinary medicine, who, among other things, oversaw the production of public health publications that were distributed to Hawaii physicians and veterinarians. Your Committee also notes that many federal health agencies or departments and most state health departments have a public health veterinarian. Your Committee believes that having a veterinary medical officer in the Department of Health will, among other benefits, help combat the spread of rat lungworm and other zoonotic diseases in the State's human population and support statewide efforts to protect and improve human health.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing its effective date to July 1, 2150, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1891, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1891, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture,


RICHARD P. CREAGAN, Chair



