

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 04 , 2020

RE: H.B. No. 2656
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 Lower & Higher Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 2656 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish the Hawaii Justice League Program in the University of Hawaii to provide partial student loan repayment assistance for lawyers who agree to pursue the practice of law in underserved rural areas in the State.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from William S. Richardson School of Law and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance.

Your Committee finds that few new lawyers are able to practice public interest law in underserved rural areas because of the high cost to attend law school, the debt that law school students graduate with, and the high cost of living in Hawaii. Your Committee further finds that loan repayment assistance programs have been successfully used in the State to increase the number of educators in teaching positions that are hard to fill. This measure will establish a partial loan repayment assistance



program that will also encourage and enable lawyers to pursue the practice of law in underserved rural areas in the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Deleting repetitive language requiring the University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law to prioritize loan repayments with lawyers who choose to practice law in rural areas;
- (2) Changing the amounts appropriated to unspecified amounts;
- (3) Changing its effective date to July 1, 2050; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.


Should the Committee on Finance decide to hear this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it:

- (1) Consider appropriating \$50,000 to be deposited into the Hawaii Justice League Revolving Fund for the Hawaii Justice League Program; and
- (2) Examine the increase of the per annum maximum loan repayment amount for a cost-of-living adjustment and multiplying the amount with the United States Department of Labor Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) and the effects that a negative percent change in the CPI-U will have on the program.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Lower & Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2656, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2656, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Lower & Higher
Education,



JULIAN H. WOODSON, Chair



