

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 07 , 2020

RE: H.B. No. 2707  
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 Human Services & Homelessness, to which was referred H.B. No. 2707 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a behavioral health social worker scholarship program (scholarship program) to be administered by the University of Hawaii.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Public Safety, Judiciary, University of Hawaii System, Democratic Party of Hawaii, National Association of Social Workers - Hawaii Chapter, Catholic Charities Hawaii, HOPE Services Hawaii, and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that increasing the number of social workers in Hawaii is necessary to address the prevalence of individuals requiring mental health services in the State. This measure addresses the need for well-trained social workers who can respond to the behavioral health needs of individuals, many of whom experience homelessness. Providing opportunities through the scholarship program will encourage and attract more students to



pursue a career in behavioral health social work and provide greater access to mental health services and treatment.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Including the Department of Health, Department of Public Safety, Judiciary, and service providers contracted by these departments and branch in the five-year service commitment component of the scholarship program;
- (2) Changing its effective date to December 31, 2059, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) 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 Human Services & Homelessness that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2707, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2707, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Lower & Higher Education.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Human Services &  
Homelessness,

  
JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



