

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 06 2020

RE: S.B. No. 2502
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirtieth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2020
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 2502 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CHILD ABUSE REPORTING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to add members of the clergy, commercial computer technicians, commercial film and photographic print or image processors, and administrators and employees of organizations that have direct contact with or supervision of children to the categories of persons who are required to report child abuse and neglect to the Department of Human Services or the police department. This measure also provides a "safe harbor" through December 31, 2020, for reporting by clergy of known or suspected child abuse that was previously unreported and that did not arise during a penitential communication.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services, Hawaii Youth Services Network, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that in 2017, the child welfare services branch of the State's department of human services received 3,702 reports of child abuse. More than half of these reports were made by mandated reporters working in fields such as medicine, law enforcement, and social services. Your Committee also finds that



unfortunately, despite the extent of reporting that does occur, many other instances of child abuse go unreported.

Your Committee additionally finds, sexual exploitation of children occurs online, making it easier for some predators to avoid detection and arrest. Your Committee notes that by requiring computer technicians to report to law enforcement computer files containing child pornography, the State can protect more children from exploitation and abuse.

This measure therefore is to update Hawaii's mandatory child abuse and neglect reporting law by adding members of the clergy, commercial computer technicians, commercial film and photographic print or image processors, and others in organizations that have direct contact with or supervision of children to the categories of persons who are required to report. These additional categories of mandatory reporters are consistent with California's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act.

Your Committee has amended this measure by clarifying that the employer or employee of a commercial computer technician designated to receive a written follow-up report as required by this Act is subject to the reporting requirements of this section. Your Committee has further 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 Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2502, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2502, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

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


RUSSELL E. RUDERMAN, Chair



