

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

652

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 04 2021**

RE: S.B. No. 970  
S.D. 2

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2021  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and  
Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 970, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TELEHEALTH,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to authorize the  
establishment of a physician-patient relationship via a telehealth  
interaction if the physician is licensed to practice medicine in  
the State.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure  
from the Hawaii Medical Board, University of Hawai'i System, Office  
of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawai'i Pacific Health, Healthcare Association  
of Hawaii, Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, AARP Hawai'i, Hawaii  
Substance Abuse Coalition, The Queen's Health Systems, Aloha  
Independent Living Hawaii, Hawai'i Public Health Institute,  
American Telemedicine Association, and two individuals.

Your Committees find that the coronavirus disease 2019  
(COVID-19) pandemic has resulted in the increased use of  
telehealth services. However, existing state law relating to the  
practice of telehealth is ambiguous regarding whether a patient  
can use telehealth to establish a relationship with a physician.  
Certain emergency proclamations and temporary waivers issued by  
the Governor during the COVID-19 pandemic clarified that a  
physician-patient relationship could be established by telehealth,



and this measure codifies this change permanently to recognize this widely utilized practice in the United States and to significantly aid in expanding access to health care services, especially for the elderly and patients living in rural areas.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that, once a physician-patient relationship is established, a patient or physician licensed in this State may use telehealth for any authorized purpose, including consultation with a medical provider licensed in another state; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

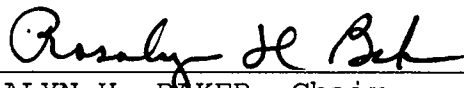
As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 970, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 970, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committees on Commerce and  
Consumer Protection and  
Judiciary,



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KARL RHOADS, Chair



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ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair





