

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 17 2022

RE: S.B. No. 2375

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 2375 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SOCIAL WORK,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to require and appropriate funds for the Department of Public Safety, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services, to develop and establish a program to train incarcerated nonviolent individuals in the area of social work.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Community Alliance on Prisons; Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center; Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition; National Association of Social Workers, Hawai'i Chapter; and two individuals. Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance, Department of Human Services, and Department of Public Safety.

Your Committees find that the State is facing a shortage of social workers to help people in the State manage their mental health and cope with stressors in their everyday lives. This shortage is of concern as social workers already have full caseloads and may be unable to provide additional services, which may in turn intensify the need for help and increase burnout among social workers. The demand for social workers will likely



continue to rise, especially during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic and its aftermath, as individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, life transitions, and other mental health challenges will need social workers' support to address difficult or stressful life situations. Your Committees believe that some nonviolent incarcerated individuals may have experienced the need for social services or may have firsthand experience receiving services from social workers that make them uniquely qualified to enter the field of social work as assistants after undergoing training. This measure will allow the State to help nonviolent incarcerated individuals reintegrate into society and address the high demand for social workers by requiring and appropriating funds for the Department of Public Safety, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services, to develop and establish a program to train incarcerated nonviolent individuals in the area of social work.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs and Human Services that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2375 and recommend that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Public Safety,
Intergovernmental, and Military
Affairs and Human Services,



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA, Chair



