

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **1437** -22

Honolulu, Hawaii
MAR 24 , 2022

RE: S.B. No. 2624
S.D. 2
H.D. 2

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred S.B. No. 2624, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish and fund:

- (1) A Telehealth Pilot Program to provide telehealth medical services in two distinct project sites in medically underserved areas; and
- (2) A Rural Health Care Pilot Program to assist residents in three distinct rural areas, one each on the islands of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Disability and Communication Access Board, Hawaii Primary Care Association, Hawaii Medical Association, Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition, The Queen's Health Systems, Hawaii Psychiatric Medical Association, and two individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure

2022-2494 SB2624 HD2 HSCR HMSO



from the Department of Budget and Finance, State Council on Mental Health, and Hawai'i State Center for Nursing.

Your Committee finds that there is an ongoing shortage of primary, specialty, and behavioral health care providers in the State, which leaves many Hawaii residents, particularly elderly and rural residents, unable to obtain timely and appropriate health care and behavioral health care services. Your Committee further finds that although telehealth is a viable solution for maximizing existing local resources and increasing patient convenience and compliance, no more than fifteen percent of practicing providers in Hawaii report a telehealth experience.

The pilot programs established by this measure will help improve the quality and availability of health care in rural and medically underserved areas in the State by encouraging an increase in the use of telehealth by providers. This measure also offers an incentive, in the form of an availability fee, to health care professionals who practice in certain specialties in rural areas.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Removing the procurement exemptions of the Telehealth Pilot Program; and
- (2) 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 Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2624, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2624, S.D. 2, H.D. 2.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce,



AARON LING JOHANSON, Chair



