

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 19 2021

RE: S.B. No. 732
S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Health, to which was referred S.B. No. 732 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE NON-VIOLENT RESPONSE TEAM PILOT PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Direct the Department of Health to create a two-year non-violent response team pilot program; and
- (2) Appropriate funds for the non-violent response team pilot program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Hawai'i Psychological Association, Young Progressives Demanding Action, and twenty-one individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Health.

Your Committee finds that Oahu has about 4,448 homeless people, twenty-three percent of whom report having mental health problems, and eighteen percent of whom report having a substance use problem. Many of those people end up having encounters with the police that result in arrest and incarceration. Your Committee further finds that a crisis intervention team would be



more effective than law enforcement in responding to homeless people in distress and others with mental health or substance use disorders and could save the State in incarceration, ambulance, and emergency room costs. This measure directs the Department of Health to create a two-year non-violent response team pilot program.

Your Committee recognizes the testimony of the Department of Health, which raised concerns that the Department already has a program in place called the Hawaii CARES Program, which serves the purposes of the proposed pilot program. While your Committee is in strong support of the establishment of the non-violent response team pilot program, your Committee also recognizes the financial constraints of the State.

Therefore, your Committee has amended this measure by deleting its contents and inserting language to:

- (1) Direct the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a study examining the efficacy of the Hawaii CARES Program offered by the Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration Adult Mental Health Division;
- (2) Require that the study include the following:
 - (A) A summary of the responses and interventions made by the Hawaii CARES Program during the past five years, including intervention responses to incidents related to mental health, substance abuse, suicide threats, as well as providing conflict resolution and welfare checks on the island of Oahu;
 - (B) Whether any of the responses and interventions listed in subparagraph (a) involved an armed response; and
 - (C) A financial report for the preceding five fiscal years; and
- (3) Require that the Legislative Reference Bureau submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later



than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2022.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 732, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 732, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Health,



JABRETT KEOHOKALOLE, Chair



