Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 2 9 , 2023

RE: S.B. No. 179

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was
referred S.B. No. 179 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

(1) Rename the statewide and county-level voters with
special needs advisory committees to elections
accessibility needs advisory committees; and

(2) Recognize that voting accessibility needs may arise from
disabilities other than those of a physical nature.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure
from the Office of Elections, State Council on Developmental
Disabilities, Disability and Communication Access Board, Hawaii
Disability Rights Center, Voters with Special Needs Advisory
Committee, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that the purpose of the voters with
special needs advisory committees is to represent and advise on
behalf of voters with accessibility needs, regardless of whether
the disabilities are of a physical nature. However, under
existing law, members must identify as voters with physical
disabilities. This measure amends the membership of the

committees allowing for the inclusion of persons with disabilities that are not of a physical nature, which allows the committees to be more representative of the group on whose behalf the committees advocate.

Your Committee further finds that language is the basis of thoughts and attitudes. While standards for appropriate terminology continually evolve, your Committee recognizes that the use of "special needs" is patronizing and distancing by persons with disabilities. Accordingly, this measure renames the committees to be more inclusive and appropriate.

Furthermore, your Committee notes that there are several provisions in the Hawaii Revised Statutes that continue to use the term "special needs" when referencing persons with disabilities. These references warrant equal scrutiny and should be similarly amended. However, your Committee acknowledges that the title of this measure prevents your Committee from carrying-out those appropriate amendments.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 179 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair

Record of Votes of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Bill/Resolution No.: SB 179	Committee Referral: JHA	Date: 3/22/2023

☐ The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.

The recommendation is to: ☒ Pass, unamended (as is) ☐ Pass, with amendments (HD) ☐ Hold
☐ Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)

JHA Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. TARNAS, David A. (C)	✓			
2. TAKAYAMA, Gregg (VC)	✓			
3. GANADEN, Sonny	✓			
4. HOLT, Daniel				✓
5. HASHIMOTO, Troy N.	✓			
6. ICHIYAMA, Linda	✓			
7. ILAGAN, Greggor	✓			
8. KONG, Sam Satoru	✓			
9. MIZUNO, John M.				✓
10. SOUZA, Kanani	✓			
TOTAL (10)	8	-	-	2

The recommendation is: ☒ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted

If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation.
committee acronym(s)

Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____

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