

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **200** -24

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 08, 2024

RE: H.B. No. 1830
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health & Homelessness, to which was referred H.B. No. 1830 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish provisional or associate-level licensure requirements and insurance reimbursement allowances for marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, and psychologists in training;
- (2) Require psychologist license applicants to possess a doctoral degree and complete certain supervised experience requirements before sitting for the licensing examination; and
- (3) Authorize insurance reimbursements for services provided by a supervised social work intern, in certain circumstances.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Wellness and Resilience; Department of Health; National Association of Social Workers - Hawai'i; Hawaiian Islands Association for Marriage and Family Therapy; Hawai'i Counselors

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Association; Catholic Charities Hawai'i; Mental Health America of Hawai'i; Hawai'i Psychological Association; Hawaii Disability Rights Center; Pau Hana Counseling, LLC; Dawn Baxter, LLC; Elemental Guidance, LLC; Root2Rise Counseling Center; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Board of Psychology; and Hawaii Medical Service Association.

Your Committee finds that there is a great demand for mental health practitioners in the State. Your Committee further finds that as part of the requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist, mental health counselor, or psychologist, applicants must provide clinical services under the direct supervision of a licensed therapist, counselor, or psychologist. However, there are no existing state laws that allow for health insurance reimbursements for these services, which means these mental health professionals are providing these services unpaid. As a result, many of these applicants permanently leave the State to pursue the final stages of their licensure requirements in states where insurance reimbursement is permitted. This measure seeks to proactively address the current workforce shortage of mental health providers and ensure that these trained professionals remain in Hawaii and continue to provide much-needed services to their patients.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the clinical supervision requirements for associate marriage and family therapists may be performed by any licensed mental health professional in good standing with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, in addition to a licensed marriage and family therapist in good standing;
- (2) Clarifying that the clinical supervision practicum requirements for associate mental health counselors may be performed by a licensed psychologist, clinical social worker, advanced practice registered nurse with a specialty in mental health, marriage and family therapist, or physician with a specialty in psychiatry, in addition to a licensed mental health counselor;
- (3) Removing the requirement that applicants for associate or provisional licenses in psychology, marriage and



family therapy, and mental health counseling pass their respective licensing exams prior to applying for associate licensure;

- (4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$73,406 for the establishment of one office assistant position and \$75,000 to make appropriate updates to the Professional and Vocational Licensing Division's internal databases.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health & Homelessness that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1830, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1830, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.

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



DELLA AU BELATTI, Chair



