

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

202

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 08 , 2023

RE: H.B. No. 775  
H.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred H.B. No. 775 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE SOCIAL WORKERS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY PILOT PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish the Social Workers for Public Safety Pilot Program within the Department of Public Safety, or its successor agency.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission, State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers, Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition, Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center, National Association of Social Workers Hawai'i Chapter, and four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Public Safety and Department of Law Enforcement.

Your Committee finds that persons who are chronically unsheltered, mentally impaired, or suffer from a substance use disorder often have multiple encounters with law enforcement officers, who may lack the resources and training to effectively assist them. Your Committee further finds that social workers have the training and expertise needed to offer rehabilitative

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assistance to chronically unsheltered persons, persons experiencing a mental health crisis, or persons with substance use disorders. This measure provides individuals in crises with a law enforcement response in tandem with necessary rehabilitative assistance, thereby avoiding any potential miscommunication during law enforcement encounters that may put the individual, officer, or the community at risk, which will in turn help reduce arrest, incarceration, and recidivism rates.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Including human service professionals in addition to social workers in the Pilot program to conform to the Department of Human Resources and Development's parallel position classification system;
- (2) Specifying that a social worker or human service professional may be on call or ready to join law enforcement officers when responding to certain incidents;
- (3) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) 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 Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 775, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 775, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Human Services,



JOHN M. MIZUNO, Chair



