

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 22, 2024

RE: S.B. No. 3239
S.D. 2
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 Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred S.B. No. 3239, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MEDICAL DEBT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the Office of Wellness and Resilience to convene a Medical Debt Forgiveness Working Group to study the feasibility of developing, implementing, and executing a program for the State to acquire and forgive outstanding medical debt of Hawaii residents.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the State Health Planning and Development Agency; Healthcare Association of Hawaii; The Queen's Health System; Holomua Collaborative; and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of Wellness and Resilience and American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

Your Committee finds that medical debt can take a serious toll on an individual's mental and physical well-being. Individuals with debt are three times more likely to have mental health conditions, such as anxiety, stress, or depression. Medical debt is also more likely to burden people with disabilities or in worse health, lower-income persons, and



uninsured persons. This measure will convene a working group to examine the feasibility of relieving Hawaii residents of a medical debt burden.

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. 3239, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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


for MARK M. NAKASHIMA, Chair



