

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 571 -24

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16 , 2024

RE: H.B. No. 2544
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. 2544 entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a two-year pilot project to make chartered plane seats available to patients, medical insurers, and medical service providers to consistently and dependably transport residents of certain medically underserved communities.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from one member of the Maui County Council; Hawai'i Pacific Health; Hawaii Medical Service Association; AlohaCare; Moloka'i Drugs, Inc.; Indivisible Hawaii Healthcare Team; Hawaii Medical Association; Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association; Kapaakea Hawaiian Homestead Association; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Health and Department of Human Services.

Your Committee finds that the residents of Molokai and Lanai are medically underserved and often must travel to Maui or Oahu for medical care. Your Committee further finds that between 2020 and 2022, Molokai and Lanai lost access to two air carriers, leaving both islands with a single air carrier available to the

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public for departures from both islands. Since then, the residents of these communities have been experiencing inconsistent and undependable air transportation services, including frequent and last-minute flight changes, cancellations, and lengthy delays. This measure is intended to ensure the residents of Molokai and Lanai are able to receive appropriate and timely medical care through the use of chartered flights.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Deleting language allowing medical providers to reserve and pay for seats on chartered flights;
- (2) Changing the number of roundtrip flights offered per week to an unspecified amount;
- (3) Deleting language establishing the Essential Rural Medical Air Transport Revolving Fund and the associated appropriation into the fund;
- (4) Establishing an end date of June 30, 2026, for the pilot program;
- (5) Changing the appropriation to the Department of Health to an unspecified amount and changing the source of funding to the State's general revenues, rather than the Essential Rural Medical Air Transport Revolving Fund;
- (6) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (7) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it choose to deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$2,000,000.

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. 2544, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2544, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



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

Della A Belatti

DELLA AU BELATTI, Chair



