

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 14

, 2024

RE: S.B. No. 279  
S.D. 1  
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 Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 279, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require Medicaid and private insurance coverage for ketamine therapy to treat depression; and
- (2) Appropriate funds for costs resulting from Medicaid coverage for ketamine therapy.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Beyond Mental Health; Kaiser Permanente Hawaii; and six individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Human Services; Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Hawaii Association of Health Plans; and Hawaii Medical Service Association.

Your Committee finds that ketamine therapy may relieve depressive symptoms and restore quality of life when all other treatments have failed. However, your Committee finds that this treatment can be cost prohibitive for many patients in Hawaii.



This measure therefore requires Medicaid and private insurance coverage of ketamine therapy for Hawaii residents suffering from treatment-resistant depression.

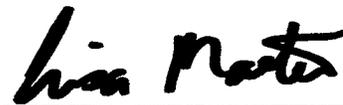
Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying the health care providers who are authorized to prescribe ketamine to treat depression; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee notes that Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 90, introduced during the Regular Session of 2024, is the concurrent resolution that specifically identifies this measure and requests the Auditor to prepare an impact assessment report on the mandated coverage of ketamine therapy, as is required pursuant to section 23-51, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

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 S.B. No. 279, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 279, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.

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



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LISA MARTEN, Chair



