STAND. COM. REP. NO. 497

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 1 4 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1520

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi President of the Senate Thirty-Third State Legislature Regular Session of 2025 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 1520 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FAMILY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish an exemption from mediation in paternity proceedings where there are allegations of domestic abuse; and
- (2) Clarify the exemption from mediation in divorce proceedings as it relates to domestic abuse.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu, Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that the family courts of Hawaii have championed mediation in many of the case types under its jurisdiction, including divorce and paternity cases. Your Committee further finds that in cases involving domestic abuse allegations, safety concerns have prompted the application of different physical protections and legal process protections, such as the judges' consideration of the allegations before accepting the mediation agreement. This measure balances the autonomy of a

party to exercise mediation opportunities in paternity cases and applies to these cases the many protections afforded to parties in divorce cases that involve allegations of domestic abuse.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health and Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1520 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

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

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The Senate Thirty-Third Legislature State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes Committee on Health and Human Services HHS

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The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.							
If so, then the previous decision was to:							
The Recommendation is:							
Pass, unamended Pass, with amendments Hold Recommit 2312 2311 2310 2313							
Members			Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A. (C)							
AQUINO, Henry J.C. (VC)							
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.							
KEOHOKALOLE, Jarrett							
FEVELLA, K	urt						
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Recommendation:							
Adopted Not Adopted							
Chair's or Designee's Signature:							
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^{*}Only one measure per Record of Votes