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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
House Committee on Human Services
Tuesday, February 14, 2023
9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference

On the following measure:
H.B. 467, H.D. 1, RELATING TO SOCIAL WORK

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Mizuno and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rochelle Araki, and I am the Executive Officer of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Professional and Vocational Licensing Division (Division) Social Worker Licensing Program (Program). I apologize for my inability to attend the hearing due to a scheduled board meeting. The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to require: (1) the Department of Public Safety, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services, to develop and establish a social work training program to assist nonviolent incarcerated individuals in exploring a professional pathway in social work and becoming eligible to work as assistants to licensed social workers; and (2) the Department of Public Safety and Department of Human Services to jointly submit a report of the departments' progress in developing

and establishing the social work training program to the Legislature no later than the twenty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2024 and 2025.

While the Department appreciates the intent of this measure, the Department would like to ensure that any individual exploring a professional pathway in the practice of social work also comply with Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) chapter 467E. HRS chapter 467E sets forth, among other things, the requirements to be issued a license to practice social work in the State of Hawaii, as well as specific prohibited acts in connection with the use of the title of social worker with a person's name.

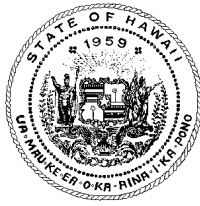
For the Committee's information, HRS section 467E-7 sets forth the license requirements for licensed social workers in the State, including education, examination, and experience requirements, and HRS section 467E-13 sets forth prohibited acts and penalties. HRS section 467E-13 states, in relevant part, that:

- (a) No person shall:
 - (1) Use in connection with the person's name any designation tending to imply that the person is a social worker, licensed bachelor social worker, licensed social worker, or licensed clinical social worker unless the person is duly licensed and authorized under this chapter; and
 - (2) Represent oneself as a social worker, licensed bachelor social worker, licensed social worker, or licensed clinical social worker during the time the person's license issued under this chapter is forfeited, terminated, suspended, or revoked.
- (b) Any person who violates this section shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000 and each day's violation shall be deemed a separate offense.

Any person engaged in the practice of social work, unless specifically exempted from licensure pursuant to HRS section 467E-6, is subject to licensure by the Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 467, HD1
RELATING TO SOCIAL WORK

by
Tommy Johnson, Director

House Committee on Human Services
Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Terez Amato, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 14, 2023; 9:30 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 329 and Via Video Conference

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **opposes** House Bill (HB) 467, HD1, which requires PSD and the Department of Human Services to develop a social work training program as a pathway for incarcerated individuals to work as assistants to licensed social workers.

PSD respectfully recommends that alternative initiatives be considered, such as allocating additional funds and resources to the colleges within the State of Hawai'i to increase their capacity for any interested individuals to obtain a professional degree in social work, or to obtain a course certificate as a para-professional social service assistant.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.



HB467 Offender Education for Social Work
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair
Tuesday, February 14, 2023, 9:30 Room 329

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports HB467:

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment and prevention agencies.

There could be potential here.

A successful candidate for social work starts with education and includes:

1. Empathy, communication, organization
2. Commitment, ethics, patience
3. Active listening, critical thinking, cultural competence
4. Self-care, organization, and
5. Willingness to be trained and developed.

Once offenders are released, **successful reentry contains** these elements *if needed*:

1. **Substance use disorder treatment** or co-occurring substance abuse and
2. **Mental health treatment**
3. **Criminality programs** to change attitudes and beliefs about crime.
4. Housing
5. Family reunification
6. Employment and/or Education
7. Support from Probation/Parole
8. Case management as needed.
9. Healthcare
10. Mentoring

Reentry is a highly cost-effective investment.

HSAC appreciates the opportunity to testify and is available for questions.

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair

Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 14, 2023 - 9:30am - via videoconference – Rm 329

Testimony in Support for HB467 HD1 RELATING TO SOCIAL WORK

The National Association of Social Workers – Hawai'i (NASW- HI) supports HB467 HD1, which would require the Departments of Public Safety and Human Services to coordinate to establish a program to train nonviolent, incarcerated individuals in the area of social work.

NASW-HI greatly appreciates the spirit and intent of this measure, which would encourage nonviolent incarcerated individuals, with valuable life experience interfacing with social service organizations, to train and pursue employment opportunities in the area of social work, once released.

However, we wish to highlight that a license in social work - requiring a masters degree including practicum experience, as well as a licensure exam, cannot be accomplished via apprenticeship through this program.

To better understand the distinction between working in “the area of social work” and the “Practice of Social Work,” this description adopted by the NASW is helpful:

Social work practice consists of the professional application of social work values, principles, and techniques to one or more of the following ends: helping people obtain tangible services; counseling and psychotherapy with individuals, families, and groups; helping communities or groups provide or improve social and health services; and participating in legislative processes. The practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior; of social, economic, and cultural institutions; and of the interaction of all these factors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support.

Sincerely,

 , MSW, LCSW

Sonja Bigalke-Bannan, MSW, LCSW

Executive Director,

National Association of Social Workers- Hawai'i Chapter

HB-467-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2023 3:36:43 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/14/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nikos Leverenz	Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, & Members of the Human Services Committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center, I am writing in support of HB 467, HD 1, which would provide funds to implement a pilot program with PSD to provide workforce training to support non-violent incarcerated individuals in potentially starting a career path toward social services.

We recommend that this program be in collaboration with the University of Hawai'i and/or Hawai'i Pacific University as both have robust social work programs. We also hope this prospective training not be limited to social work given that the path to becoming a social worker is long. There may be other paraprofessional careers (e.g., peer specialists and community health workers) that may benefit from the kind of program contemplated here.

HHHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals who are impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have behavioral health problems, including those relating to substance use and underlying mental health conditions, and have been deeply impacted by trauma that often includes histories of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-467-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 10:56:18 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/14/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bret Mossman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Mizuno and members of the committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB467. Here in Hawai'i a disproportionately large proportion of those incarcerated are members of the native Hawaiian community, and providing dedicated social work training and opportunities can help our communities heal and develop important skills to work to dismantle this pattern.

Please support HB467,

Mahalo,

Bret Nainoa Mossman

HB-467-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2023 3:39:52 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/14/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stand in Support

HB-467-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 2:30:02 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/14/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii is facing a shortage of social workers to help individuals in the state manage their mental health and cope with stressors in their everyday lives. This shortage is concerning since social workers already have full caseloads and may be unable to provide additional services, which may in turn intensify the need for help and increase burnout among social workers.

The demand for social workers will likely continue to rise, especially during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic and its aftermath, because individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, life transitions, and other mental health challenges will need social workers' support to address difficult or stressful life situations.

To address the shortage of social workers and lack of social services in the state, providing social work training to nonviolent incarcerated individuals may help these individuals reintegrate into society once their period of incarceration is over. Please support HB467 HD1.