

MAR 08 2019

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO REQUIRE THAT EACH OF ITS DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICERS BE A PHYSICIAN LICENSED UNDER CHAPTER 453, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES.

1 WHEREAS, district health officers work extensively to
2 protect and serve their communities' medical needs in the
3 counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii by assisting communities
4 with emergency preparedness, family health services, public
5 health nursing, services for the developmentally disabled,
6 mental health services, vital statistics, and environmental
7 health services including vector control, clean air, clean
8 water, and sanitation programs; and
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10 WHEREAS, having a physician's knowledge and experience
11 facilitates the district health officer position's day-to-day
12 responsibilities and allows the officer to serve as a dedicated
13 community resource; and
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15 WHEREAS, the Department of Health has long recognized that
16 the district health officer in each of the three neighbor island
17 counties should be a licensed physician, ideally a physician
18 with experience in community medicine and public health; and
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20 WHEREAS, for many years, the Department of Health's
21 district health officers met these requirements, but at some
22 point the County of Hawaii district health officer position was
23 filled by a non-physician without medical experience or a
24 master's degree in public health, who served as an acting
25 district health officer for six years; and
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27 WHEREAS, compared to district health officers who are
28 physicians, the performance of non-physician district health
29 officers has not been as proficient or acceptable to the
30 community; and
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32 WHEREAS, there is still no requirement that all district
33 health officers be physicians; and
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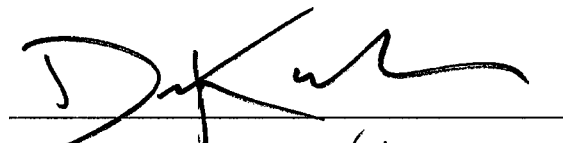
1 WHEREAS, requiring that district health officers of the
 2 Department of Health be physicians is extremely critical to the
 3 Department's ability to provide adequate community support,
 4 educate the community, and recognize the community's needs and
 5 concerns in the face of pressing public health issues; now,
 6 therefore,

7
 8 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
 9 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, that the
 10 Department of Health is requested to require that each of its
 11 district health officers be a physician licensed under Chapter
 12 453, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and

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 14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 15 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and
 16 Chairperson of the Hawaii County Council.

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OFFERED BY:



 Michelle Sidani
 Kurt Forester