

MAR 06 2020

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING STATE AND PRIVATE HEALTH CARE NETWORKS TO ALLOW SICK  
EMPLOYEES TO TAKE TIME OFF WITHOUT FEAR OF RETALIATION OR  
RETRIBUTION.

1 WHEREAS, the maintenance and safeguarding of public health  
2 is a top priority for the State; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, the consequences in failing to maintain the  
5 general health of the population falls disproportionately on the  
6 most vulnerable community members, such as keiki and kupuna; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, the State's extensive networks of public and  
9 private health care providers are tasked with the responsibility  
10 to prevent and respond to the health care needs of the  
11 community; and  
12

13 WHEREAS, the dedicated staff of doctors, nurses, and others  
14 stand at the forefront of quick and effective medical responses,  
15 thereby constituting the backbone of the health care system; and  
16

17 WHEREAS, health care workers are routinely exposed to sick  
18 patients and are at risk of becoming sick themselves; and  
19

20 WHEREAS, there is currently a global health emergency  
21 regarding the emergence and spread of COVID-19; and  
22

23 WHEREAS, according to the World Health Organization, as of  
24 March 4, 2020, the spread of COVID-19 has reached more than  
25 seventy-five nations and territories; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, according to the World Health Organization, as of  
28 March 4, 2020, there are more than 92,800 confirmed global cases  
29 of COVID-19 and at least 3,200 deaths worldwide from COVID-19;  
30 and  
31

32 WHEREAS, the world is increasingly becoming more and more  
33 interconnected; and  
34



1 WHEREAS, the rise and perpetuation of air travel has  
2 allowed for more people to travel beyond their immediate borders  
3 and has facilitated easier spreading of dangerous diseases and  
4 pathogens; and

5  
6 WHEREAS, the State relies heavily on international tourism  
7 as an important source of revenue; and

8  
9 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Business, Economic  
10 Development, and Tourism, in the year 2020, Hawaii is expected  
11 to see a 2.5 percent increase in visitor arrivals; and

12  
13 WHEREAS, while the State currently has no confirmed cases  
14 of COVID-19, the projected influx of foreign arrivals poses a  
15 reasonable risk; and

16  
17 WHEREAS, there is currently no vaccine or cure for  
18 COVID-19; and

19  
20 WHEREAS, currently, health care networks often rely on  
21 strict policies that punish health care workers for taking time  
22 off in the event of them falling ill; and

23  
24 WHEREAS, one such policy punishes workers for an "excess"  
25 of "two occurrences of absence within one month or two  
26 occurrences of tardiness within 14 consecutive days"; and

27  
28 WHEREAS, this "[i]mproper or excessive absence . . . may  
29 result in corrective action or denial of request for time off";  
30 and

31  
32 WHEREAS, "[e]ligibility for transfer, changes in regularly  
33 scheduled hours, promotions and employment status may also be  
34 affected"; and

35  
36 WHEREAS, such practices compel health care workers to  
37 continue working with critically ill patients, even while they  
38 are sick; and

39  
40 WHEREAS, the quality of health care will subsequently be  
41 negatively impacted, both on the health care worker and patient;  
42 now, therefore,



# S.R. NO. 115

1  
 2 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature  
 3 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, that state and  
 4 private health care networks are urged to allow sick employees  
 5 to take time off for illness without fear of retaliation or  
 6 retribution; and

7  
 8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state and private health care  
 9 networks are urged to review their attendance policies in light  
 10 of the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak; and

11  
 12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 13 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, President of the  
 14 Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and heads of  
 15 all state and private health care networks.

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 17  
 18

OFFERED BY:

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[Signature]

