

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 07 2022**

RE: S.B. No. 2437  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2022  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 2437 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE NEIGHBOR ISLANDS BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to require the Department of Human Services to establish a Neighbor Islands Blind and Visually Impaired Service Pilot Program that supplements existing statewide services by providing training and other services to neighbor island residents who are blind or visually impaired.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the National Federation of the Blind of Hawai'i, Hawaii State Committee of Blind Vendors, and seven individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Human Services, Department of Budget and Finance, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that approximately two thousand neighbor island residents who are blind or visually impaired do not have access to or are ineligible for existing state and local support services, including training, adjustments to blindness services, and transportation. The Neighbor Islands Blind and Visually Impaired Service Pilot Program to be established pursuant to this measure will supplement existing statewide services and enable



these individuals to receive the necessary training and other services that would enable them to have full and integrated lives in their existing communities.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the Department of Human Services shall work with neighbor island transportation service providers and other individuals and entities to develop a special needs transportation assistance service network to serve program participants;
- (2) Defining "neighbor island"; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee has reviewed the testimony of the Department of Budget and Finance expressing concerns regarding this measure's possible effect on the State's obligation to adhere to the maintenance of effort requirements as a recipient of Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief funds under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Recovery Plan Act of 2021. Your Committee finds that this issue raises concerns that merit further consideration and respectfully requests that your Committee on Ways and Means further examine those issues and concerns raised by the testimonies on this measure.

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. 2437, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2437, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

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

  
JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



