

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 04 2023

RE: S.R. No. 152

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.R. No. 152 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES' MED-QUEST DIVISION TO TAKE STEPS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE PROVIDER RATES ARE ESTABLISHED FOR APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS SERVICES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to request the Department of Human Services' Med-QUEST Division to:

- (1) Take steps necessary to ensure that adequate provider rates are established for applied behavioral analysis services;
- (2) Assess current reimbursement rates for applied behavior analysis services; and
- (3) Submit a report of its findings and recommendations on appropriate reimbursement rate increases, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2024.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Association for Behavior Analysis; Hawaii Disability Rights Center; BAYADA Behavioral Health; Behavior

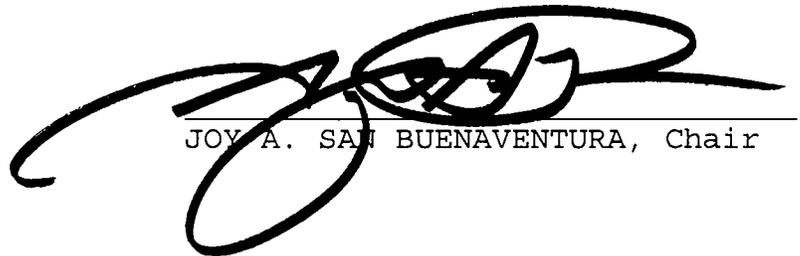


Analysis No Ka Oi, Inc.; Council of Autism Service Providers; and fifteen individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Human Services and one individual.

Your Committee finds that applied behavior analysis is a medically necessary service provided for Med-QUEST beneficiaries under the age of twenty-one with an autism spectrum disorder diagnosis. Your Committee also finds that the Med-QUEST reimbursement rates for applied behavior analysis services have not been increased since their establishment in 2015, and the State's current reimbursement rate for applied behavior analysis services, particularly for registered behavior technicians, is below the current market rate. Behavioral health service providers in the State have struggled to meet the needs of QUEST beneficiaries due to the increased costs of operating a business. The low reimbursement rates and the high cost of living in the State also contribute to shortage in staff, resulting in significant delays for QUEST beneficiaries to access the needed services. This measure will allow behavioral health service providers to maintain their operations, pay livable wages to their staff, and create additional positions to sufficiently serve Med-QUEST beneficiaries.

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 concurs with the intent and purpose of S.R. No. 152 and recommends its adoption.

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



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



