

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1261

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 22 2023

RE: H.B. No. 617
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

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 H.B. No. 617, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ORAL HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish an Oral Health Task Force to review information and data relating to the status of oral health in the State and make recommendations to improve the State's oral health infrastructure; and
- (2) Appropriate funds to help facilitate the work of the Oral Health Task Force.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services; Department of Health; State Council on Developmental Disabilities; Hawaii Disability Rights Center; Hawaii Dental Service; Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; Papa Ola Lōkahi; AlohaCare; Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association; The Queen's Health System; Kūpuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; Hawaii Dental Association; We Are One, Inc.; and five individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the University of Hawai'i System.



Your Committee finds that oral health is essential to an individual's overall physical, psychological, social, and economic well-being. Despite the importance of oral health, Hawaii residents generally suffer from poor oral health, and Hawaii has among the highest prevalence in the nation of preventable dental decay in children and adults. Further, the Department of Health's Dental Health Division was eliminated as part of the 2009 budget cuts. To address this public health concern, this measure establishes a task force to identify and develop strategies to improve oral health outcomes for Hawaii's residents.

Your Committee notes the testimony submitted by the Hawaii Dental Association that recommends the membership of the task force include more dentists and that at least one dentist from each county should be invited to serve on the Oral Health Task Force. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider further examining the composition of the Oral Health Task Force to address this concern.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that community advocates and representatives of private entities shall be invited to serve on, rather than be appointed to, the Oral Health Task Force;
- (2) Requiring that the interim report on the Oral Health Task Force's findings and recommendations be submitted to the Legislature by December 1, 2024, rather than December 1, 2023, and the final report be submitted by December 1, 2025, rather than December 1, 2024;
- (3) Designating that the Department of Health, rather than the Oral Health Task Force, shall submit the final report on the Task Force's findings and recommendations to the Legislature;
- (4) Requiring the Oral Health Task Force to dissolve on June 30, 2026, rather than June 30, 2025;
- (5) Specifying that the funds appropriated for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)



Program Specialist positions shall be for two permanent full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) Program Specialist positions;

- (6) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (7) Making it effective upon its approval; and
- (8) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

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 is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 617, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 617, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

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



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



