

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1453

Honolulu, Hawaii

, 2023

MAR 22

RE: S.B. No. 500
S.D. 1
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Higher Education & Technology, to which was referred S.B. No. 500, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds for the University of Hawaii at Manoa to establish three additional permanent mental health practitioner positions within the Division of Student Success' Counseling and Student Development Center.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the University of Hawai'i System and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that, according to reports highlighted by the University of Hawaii:

- (1) During the 2020-2021 school year, more than sixty percent of college students met the criteria for at least one mental health problem;
- (2) Almost three-quarters of students reported moderate or severe psychological distress;

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- (3) The most frequent presenting concerns were anxiety (sixty-one percent), stress (forty-seven percent), and depression (forty-four percent); and
- (4) Approximately eleven percent of counseling center clients reported suicidal thoughts.

Your Committee further finds that the Counseling and Student Development Center has a ratio of one mental health professional per 3,815 students, while the nationally recommended minimum ratio is one per 1,500 students. Adding three mental health professionals would bring the ratio to one per 2,384 students.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education & Technology that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 500, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 500, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Higher Education &
Technology,



AMY A. PERRUSO, Chair



