STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3552

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 0 3 2024

RE: S.R. No. 37

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi President of the Senate Thirty-Second State Legislature Regular Session of 2024 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.R. No. 37 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN THE STATE THROUGH THE PROVISION OF LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to request the Department of Health to convene a stakeholder working group to make recommendations to enhance meaningful access to health care in the State through the provision of language assistance services.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Language Access, AlohaCare, Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, Pacific Gateway Center, Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, Language Services Hawaii, Hawai'i Medical Service Association, and three individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Healthcare Association of Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that effective communication is crucial in health care and human services to prevent misdiagnosis, delayed medical treatment, and barriers to necessary services and



STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3552

programs. Your Committee finds however, that limited English proficient (LEP) individuals and individuals living with physical disabilities face barriers in equitably accessing health care when language assistance and translation services are not provided, as evidenced during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic when communities having high numbers of LEP residents experienced higher rates of incidence and mortality. This measure will facilitate a discussion among stakeholders, including health care providers, insurers, representatives of community-based organizations, and language service providers, to make recommendations to the Legislature to ensure that all individuals in the State requiring language assistance services have meaningful access to health care.

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. 37 and recommends its adoption.

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

Chair VENTURA.



The Senate Thirty-Second Legislature State of Hawaiʻi

Record of Votes Committee on Health and Human Services HHS

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:			Date:		
SR 37	HHS			03/22/2024		
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to:						
The Recommendation is:						
Pass, unamended Pass, with amendments Hold Recommit 2312 2311 2310 2313						
Members		Aye	Aye (Wi	R) N	lay	Excused
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A. (C)		7				
AQUINO, Henry J.C. (VC)						
KEOHOKALOLE, Jarrett						
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L.						
AWA, Brenton						
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TOTAL		3				2
Recommendation:						
Chair's or Designee's Signature:						
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy						

*Only one measure per Record of Votes