

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

900

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 2 8 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1245
S.D. 2

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.B. No. 1245, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO PHARMACISTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to mandate reimbursement for services provided by pharmacists within their scope of practice by private and public health plans issued in the State.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Board of Pharmacy; University of Hawai'i System; Family Medicine Center; Hawai'i Island Community Health Center; Times Pharmacy; The Queen's Health Systems; Lihue Pharmacy Group; Moloka'i Drugs, Inc.; American Pharmacists Association; Hawai'i Pacific Health; Walgreen Co.; Hawai'i Pharmacists Association; KTA Pharmacy; Grassroot Institute of Hawaii; Keto Prescription Clinic; and fifteen individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Human Services, Office of the Auditor, Hawaii Medical Service Association, and Hawaii Association of Health Plans.

Your Committee finds that there is a physician shortage in the State. Pharmacists have made significant contributions to



help bridge the gaps created by the physician shortage, especially in rural areas and neighbor islands. Pharmacies are geographically dispersed throughout the community with extended hours of operation, making access to health care convenient for patients in each locality. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, pharmacists aided in ordering and administering COVID-19 tests and vaccines in pharmacies across the State, safely expanding patient access to care. However, despite their extensive training and vital contributions, pharmacists face barriers to reimbursement from health insurance for the care that they provide. Without provider status, many pharmacists will continue to remain uncompensated for their services, limiting their ability to expand their practice and better support community health initiatives. This measure aligns Hawaii with a number of other states to help ensure pharmacists are able to continue to serve their communities and provide access to quality health care across the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Reinserting language from the original version of this measure to require private and public health plans to recognize pharmacists licensed pursuant to chapter 461, Hawaii Revised Statutes, as participating providers for any plan delivered or issued for delivery in the State on or after July 1, 2026;
- (2) Inserting language to require payment or reimbursement to a pharmacist or pharmacy for the cost of a service performed within their scope of practice;
- (3) Removing language that would have inappropriately added pharmacists to section 346-53.64, Hawaii Revised Statutes, relating to Federally Qualified Health Centers;
- (4) Deleting language that would have required the Department of Human Services to submit any needed state Medicaid plan amendments and waivers to the United States Department of Health and Human Services for federal approval by an unspecified date;
- (5) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose; and



- (6) 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 Commerce and Consumer Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1245, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1245, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Commerce and
Consumer Protection,



JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, Chair



