

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1520

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 1520 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FAMILY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish an exemption from mediation in paternity proceedings where there are allegations of domestic abuse; and
- (2) Clarify the exemption from mediation in divorce proceedings as it relates to domestic abuse.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu, Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and one individual.

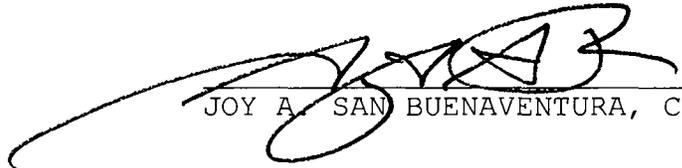
Your Committee finds that the family courts of Hawaii have championed mediation in many of the case types under its jurisdiction, including divorce and paternity cases. Your Committee further finds that in cases involving domestic abuse allegations, safety concerns have prompted the application of different physical protections and legal process protections, such as the judges' consideration of the allegations before accepting the mediation agreement. This measure balances the autonomy of a



party to exercise mediation opportunities in paternity cases and applies to these cases the many protections afforded to parties in divorce cases that involve allegations of domestic abuse.

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 S.B. No. 1520 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

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



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



