

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

437

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 13 2025

RE: S.B. No. 493
S.D. 1

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. 493 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VETERINARIANS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish the Veterinary Workforce Development Special Fund;
- (2) Establish a fee to be assessed on individuals obtaining or renewing a veterinary license to be deposited into the fund; and
- (3) Establish the Veterinary Workforce Development Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program to assist veterinarians in the State with loan repayments and completion of veterinary medicine education.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture, Hawaiian Humane Society, Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain, and eleven individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association and one individual.



Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance, Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine, and Tax Foundation of Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that there is a crucial need for more veterinarians in the State. The lack of a veterinary school in the State, along with the high cost of out-of-state tuition and high levels of student loan debt, create more challenges for the State to develop the veterinary workforce to meet the current and projected needs for veterinary services in the State. Your Committee finds that this measure provides financial assistance to veterinarian students by establishing a scholarship and loan repayment program to incentivize more veterinarians to practice in the State.

Your Committee acknowledges the testimony of the Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine expressing concerns that requiring applicants for licensure to pay the proposed workforce development fee may impose additional financial hardship on those who are in financial need of loan repayment assistance. Amendments to this measure are therefore necessary to address this concern.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Limiting the workforce development fee only to license renewals;
- (2) Amending Section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (3) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) 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. 493, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 493, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



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



JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
CPN

Bill / Resolution No.:* SB493	Committee Referral: CPN, WAM	Date: 2/4/25		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
KEOHOKALOLE, Jarrett (C)	✓			
FUKUNAGA, Carol (VC)	✓			
MCKELVEY, Angus L.K.	✓			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim"				✓
AWA, Brenton	✓			
TOTAL	4	∅	∅	1
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
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