

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **3353**

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 30 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1514
H.D. 2
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Labor and Technology, to which was referred H.B. No. 1514, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Clarify the process for selecting a certified provider of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (2) Require certified providers to automatically approve vocational rehabilitation services for an injured employee if those services will likely be required for suitable gainful employment and the initial evaluation report finds the injured employee feasible to participate;
- (3) Require providers to file an employee's vocational rehabilitation plan no later than one hundred twenty days after submitting an initial evaluation report, unless extended by the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations; and
- (4) Clarify the process for an employer to object to a vocational rehabilitation plan.



Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Department of Human Resources Development, Hawaii Insurers Council, University of Hawaii Professional Assembly, and Hawaii Medical Association.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals, Hawaii Chapter; Maui Chamber of Commerce; and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that the efficient and effective rehabilitation of employees who suffer a work-related injury relies on timely, early intervention. Therefore, it is critical that the vocational rehabilitation process, if needed, be initiated as quickly as possible to avoid prolonged adverse effects on injured employees so that they may swiftly return to work with pay comparable to pre-injury wages. Consequently, it is crucial that the injured employee promptly connect with the appropriate vocational rehabilitation provider. This measure will streamline vocational rehabilitation provider selection to enhance outcomes for injured workers and minimize costs for employers and insurers.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of January 1, 2077, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) 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 Labor and Technology that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1514, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1514, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Labor and
Technology,



BRANDON J.C. ELEFANTE, Chair



