

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 09 , 2026

RE: H.R. No. 94
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness, to which was referred H.R. No. 94, H.D. 1, entitled:

"HOUSE RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND OFFICE OF WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE, TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE PEER COUNSELOR PROGRAM TO ADDRESS YOUTH LONELINESS AND SOCIAL DISCONNECTION IN HAWAII'S SCHOOLS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to urge the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Office of Wellness and Resilience, to develop and implement a statewide peer counselor program for high school students.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds that in Hawaii, youth mental health indicators have worsened in recent years, with rising levels of anxiety, depression, and unmet emotional support needs seen among public school students. Your Committee further finds that peer support is a proven, practical approach to addressing mental health challenges. Young people naturally turn to their peers for understanding and connection and a peer support network that enables youth to build confidence and emotional wellbeing can help



reduce the risk of future mental health challenges in adulthood and contribute to improved quality of life. This measure offers a meaningful pathway to developing and implementing a statewide peer-support program that reflects Hawaii's unique cultures and communities and ensures that youth voices and lived experiences are considered in the design and evaluation of the program.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.R. No. 94, H.D. 1, and recommends its adoption.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services &
Homelessness,



LISA MARTEN, Chair



