

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **2303**

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 17 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2679
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 Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 2679 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish and appropriate funds for a one-year Digital Youth Mental Health Platform Pilot Project that will enable the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division of the Department of Health to develop and make publicly available a digital platform designed to help young people address and manage mental health challenges.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the State Health Planning and Development Agency; Department of Health; Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus Commission; Hina Mauka; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; Catholic Charities Hawai'i; Hawaii Medical Association; and twenty-one individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the State Procurement Office and Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition.

Your Committee finds that providing easy access to trusted information and resources empowers youth, reduces stigma, and may prevent mental health challenges from worsening in the future. Your Committee further finds that creating an evidence-based,



confidential digital platform makes it easier for young people, especially those in remote or underserved areas, to access mental health education, self-care tools, and healthy coping strategies. This measure helps reduce stigma by allowing youth to explore mental health resources privately, eases pressure on a limited behavioral health workforce by helping to address concerns earlier, and gathers useful data about community mental health needs to guide future improvements.

Your Committee acknowledges the concerns raised in testimony by the Hawaii State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus (LGBTQIA+) Commission that the Digital Youth Mental Health Platform Pilot Project should take into consideration the specific needs of the LGBTQIA+ community as a core component of the pilot project. Your Committee therefore requests the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division of the Department of Health to ensure the inclusion of the specific needs of the LGBTQIA+ community in the platform design, content development, user interface, data collection, and evaluation metrics of the Digital Youth Mental Health Platform Pilot Project.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Specifying that the pilot project's procurement exemptions from chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Hawaii Public Procurement Code, and from chapter 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, state law governing purchases of health and human services, shall be limited to the duration of the pilot project, not to exceed June 30, 2027;
- (2) Changing the appropriation amount from \$300,000 to an unspecified amount, to encourage further discussion on the measure; and
- (3) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

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. 2679, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass



Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2679,
S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

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



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



