

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

424

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 18 2011

RE: S.B. No. 939

Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui
President of the Senate
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2011
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health, to which was referred S.B. No. 939
entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a Statewide Fall Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator under the Department of Health and to make an appropriation for the position. The intent of this measure is to help prevent falls among elderly residents of the State.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Health; the Department of Community Services, City and County of Honolulu; The Queen's Medical Center; Project Dana; Injury Prevention Advisory Committee; and six private citizens. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance and one private citizen.

Your Committee finds that falls and fall-related injuries among elderly adults impose a financial strain on Hawaii's health care system. Among adults sixty-five years and older, falls are the leading cause of injury-related deaths, hospitalizations, and emergency medical service calls. Your Committee further finds that direct medical charges for fall and fall-related injuries amount to \$82,800,000 a year, an amount that could be doubled if the costs of rehabilitation and long-term care are taken into account.



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Your Committee additionally finds that access to fall prevention services and programs would significantly reduce these costs. Early detection of fall occurrences would reduce both expenses and suffering by expediting treatment, minimizing serious long-term consequences, reducing the extent of injury, and in some instances, avoiding death. This measure will help establish injury prevention and detection efforts with the goal of decreasing the incidence of falls among the elderly in Hawaii.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 939 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Health,



JOSH GREEN, M.D., Chair



