

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

959

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 24 2015

RE: S.C.R. No. 23
S.D. 1

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
President of the Senate
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2015
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Labor, to which was referred
S.C.R. No. 23 entitled:

"SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE HAWAII ACCESS TO
JUSTICE COMMISSION TO ASSEMBLE VARIOUS STATE AND COMMUNITY
ENTITIES TO DETERMINE WHICH AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION SHOULD
ADMINISTER FUNDING FOR CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES TO LOW- AND
MODERATE-INCOME INDIVIDUALS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to request the
Hawaii Access to Justice Commission to assemble a working group of
interested government agencies and community entities to develop a
plan for determining which agency or organization should
administer funding for civil legal services and submit the plan to
the Legislature prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
2016.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure
from the Hawaii Access to Justice Commission, Legal Aid Society of
Hawaii, and Volunteer Legal Services Hawaii. Your Committee
received comments on this measure from the Office of Community
Services.

Your Committee finds that "The 2007 Assessment of Civil Legal
Needs and Barriers of Low- and Moderate-Income People in Hawaii"
found that only one in five people has civil legal needs addressed
and that only one in three people who contact a civil legal
service provider is able to get assistance. Civil legal services

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can support efforts to ensure that government is providing effective services to help those without an attorney navigate the complex legal system. However, funding for civil legal services has decreased over the years. This measure addresses the need for funding by requesting an examination of executive agencies, the Judiciary, and community agencies to determine which agency or organization is most appropriate and suitable to administer general funding for civil legal services to obtain the best results.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Adopting the language suggested by the Hawaii Access to Justice Commission that authorizes the Commission to invite any other stakeholders to participate in the working group; 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 Judiciary and Labor that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 23, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, in the form attached hereto as S.C.R. No. 23, S.D. 1.

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


GILBERT S.C. KEITH-AGARAN, Chair



