

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1394

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 22 2019

RE: H.B. No. 678
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirtieth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2019
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health,
to which was referred H.B. No. 678, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to update terminology related to the state newborn hearing screening program and improve follow-up rates for infants identified as deaf or hard of hearing by mandating that newborn diagnostic audiologic evaluation results be reported to the Department of Health.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Health, Disability and Communication Access Board, Executive Office on Early Learning, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that the incidence of infants who are born deaf or hard of hearing in Hawaii is about twice the incidence in other states. While most newborns in the State receive newborn hearing screening evaluations, the Department of Health is routinely unable to access infant hearing screening diagnostic audiologic evaluation results and therefore cannot conduct timely follow up with families of deaf or hard of hearing infants. This can result in delayed entry into much-needed early intervention services, which are critical for deaf or hard of hearing children to develop language and social skills and



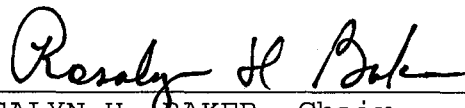
increase school readiness. By requiring that diagnostic audiologic evaluations be reported to the Department of Health, this measure ensures the Department of Health has the information it needs to conduct timely follow-ups with families of deaf or hard of hearing newborns.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the definition of "audiologist" means a professional licensed pursuant to chapter 468E, Hawaii Revised Statutes;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2019; and
- (3) 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 Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 678, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 678, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Commerce, Consumer
Protection, and Health,



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



