

February 16th, 2016

TO: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Health

FROM: Michael Macias

RE: SB 2333 Relating to Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists - **SUPPORT**

February 17, 2016 9:00am Conference Room 229

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair, Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair, and members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Health, I am Michael Macias. I am a MFT Student and I strongly support SB 2333 Relating to Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists.

I strongly support this resolution for the following reasons:

- Consumer Protection: Adding “Licensed” to the Marriage and Family Therapist license statute will reduce confusion within the therapy seeking public who may be looking for a licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) and find only MFTs in Hawaii.
- This change would align the legal title for Hawaii licensed Marriage and Family Therapists with the same distinction for licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFT) in all of the other states except for Wisconsin.
- Adding “Licensed” to the statute will reduce any confusion about therapists who are licensed MFTs in Hawaii who have met the same standards as LMFTs in other states. Without this change to our legal title, job opportunities can be affected when we are in competition with LMFTs from other states. These jobs are predominantly with active duty military, National Guard, and reserve personnel and their families. Some MFTs working for the Federal Government have informally adopted LMFT as their preferred credential, which is not currently recognized here.
- Adding “Licensed” to the statute will reduce confusion among post-graduate marriage and family therapy interns who often do not understand the legal distinction of MFT, and may utilize the title inappropriately. Often these graduates expect to become LMFTs once they are licensed, based on what they experienced in other parts of the country.

I urge your favorable consideration of SB 2333. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.