

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

518

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16, 2007

RE: H.B. No. 1478

H.D. 1

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2007
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred H.B. No. 1478, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE STATE PHARMACY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to provide necessary medical prescriptions to senior citizens in need by expanding the eligibility for the State Pharmacy Assistance Program.

More specifically, this measure repeals an asset test, increases eligibility by raising the household income ceiling, mandates State Pharmacy Assistance Program applicants to enroll in the Medicare Part D benefits program, assists enrollees in joining and changing plans, and authorizes the use of program funds to be expended on certain enrollee costs that are not covered under the Medicare Plan D program.

AARP Hawaii and the Hawaii Aging Advocates Coalition submitted testimony in support of this measure.

Currently, the State Pharmacy Assistance Program can not fully support low-income senior citizens in need of medical prescriptions. Some senior citizens can not afford the costs for prescriptions because they lack sufficient funds and do not meet certain criteria, such as the asset test or they have a household income of more than one hundred fifty per cent of the federal

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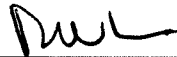


poverty level, making them ineligible to participate in the State Pharmacy Assistance Program.

Your Committee finds that repealing the asset test and raising the household income ceiling from one hundred fifty to two hundred fifty per cent of the federal poverty level permits the State Pharmacy Assistance Program to provide senior citizens in need with necessary medical prescriptions.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1478, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Finance.

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



ROBERT N. HERKES, Chair



