STAND. COM. REP. NO. **262** -08

Honolulu, Hawaii

Fe 4 8 , 2008

RE: H.B. No. 2727 H.D. 1

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say Speaker, House of Representatives Twenty-Fourth State Legislature Regular Session of 2008 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health, to which was referred H.B. No. 2727 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH INSURANCE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders have access to appropriate care and treatment through the provision of quality health care procedures such as applied behavioral analysis by requiring health insurers to provide coverage of and treatment for autism spectrum disorders.

The Autism Society of Hawaii, Hawaii Disability Rights Center, Cure Autism Now, Autism Speaks, and several concerned individuals supported this bill. The Hawaii Medical Association supported the intent of this measure. Hawaii Association of Health Plans opposed this bill. The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Hawaii Medical Services Association submitted comments.

Your Committee finds that most insurance companies do not cover autism because it is classified as an emotional disorder rather than a neurological medical condition. As a result, many people now wait more than a year for state services that treat delayed speech and other social and motor skill problems characteristic of autism. The 2001 United States Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, states, "Among the many methods

HB2727 HD1 HSCR HLT HMS 2008-1898



available for treatment and education of people with autism, applied behavior analysis has become widely accepted as an effective treatment. Thirty years of research demonstrated the efficacy of applied behavioral methods in reducing inappropriate behavior and in increasing communication, learning, and appropriate social behavior."

Your Committee notes that the statutory requirements set in section 23-51, Hawaii Revised Statutes, requiring that prior to any legislation mandating coverage for specific health services as a part of individual or group health insurance policies, being considered, a concurrent resolution must be passed calling for a report from the Auditor that assesses both the social and financial effects of the proposed mandated coverage. However, due to the extreme financial hardships placed upon families trying to ensure their children receive the care they need, the Auditor is requested to expedite this report upon passage of House Concurrent Resolution No. 62 or a similar concurrent resolution so the report may be available to the Legislature within 60 days of the concurrent resolution's passage.

Your Committee has amended this bill by:

- (1) Establishing a temporary Autism Disorders Spectrum
  Benefits And Coverage Task Force to discuss and seek
  input on the problems faced by parents of children with
  autism; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive changes for clarity, consistency, and style.

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 H.B. No. 2727, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2727, H.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 267-08 Page 3

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

JOSMUA B. GREEN, M.D., Chair

## State of Hawaii House of Representatives The Twenty-fourth Legislature



## **Record of Votes of the Committee on Health**

Bill/Resolution No.:  HB 2727	Committee Referral:	Date F I N	2-6-0	8
☐ The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to:  Pass, unamended (as is) Pass, with amendments (HD)  Hold  Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
HLT Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. GREEN, Josh, M.D. (C)	V			
2. MIZUNO, John (VC)				
3. AWANA, Karen Leinani				
4. BELATTI, Della Au				
5 PERTRAM Lee III				
5. BERTRAM, Joe, III				
6. CABANILLA, Rida T.R.				
7. RHOADS, Karl				
8. SHIMABUKURO, Maile S. L.				
9. TOKIOKA, James Kunane				
10. WARD, Gene, Ph.D.				
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WALLEY				
TOTAL (10)				2
The recommendation is:  Adopted  If joint referral, did not support recommendation.  committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office				