

**STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH (SCMH)
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON 2025 LEGISLATION MEETING**

January 28, 2025, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Remote meeting via Zoom with

in-person site at Hale F Conference Room, 2201 Waimano Home Road, Pearl City 96782

MEETING NOTES

Members Present: Katherine Aumer, Lea Dias, Kathleen Merriam, Mary Pat Waterhouse, Jackie Jackson

Members Excused: Tianna Celis-Webster

AMHD and CAMHD Staff: Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand, Valerie Yin.

Guests: Ray Rice, Raelyn Reyno

I. Call to Order

Mary Pat Waterhouse, acting as chairperson, called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m.

II. Old Business

A. Recommendations to the Full State Council – Themes & Bills

This will cover bills that have been introduced at the 2025

Legislative Session to date and which meet the themes that the Council has approved for its 2025 legislative advocacy. The themes are:

workforce development, supportive housing, employment, family and youth, crisis services, assisted community treatment, Adult Mental Health Division and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division bills, bills on mental health that are forensic-related or disaster-related or general policy-related, and bills that the Mental Health Task Force will review.

M.P. Waterhouse started by requesting that another meeting be set up for February 7, 2025, a time when some bills in the list will fall off. This will reduce the amount of time wasted in reviewing bills that will not be heard. She organized the division of reviewing responsibility based on the previous year's assignments. The present members agreed to take on the themes that are close to their assignments and interests last year:

Katherine Aumer – workforce including telehealth, school-based behavioral health, and general policies.

Jackie Jackson – Family and youth including children's welfare, juvenile justice, homelessness

Kathleen Merriam – crisis services including AMHD bills and disaster-related

Mary Pat Waterhouse -assisted community treatment, and forensic-related.

It was requested that Val Yin, CAMHD planner, provide the needed information about CAMHD bills. There was also a suggestion to see if Tianna Celis-Webster, will also be

interested in reviewing a few bills relating to youth, homelessness, foster care, or other areas that she may be interested in. It was also mentioned that Kristin Will be consulted also for forensic-related bills.

It was recognized that some bills will fall under more than one theme, including supportive housing and employment themes. So, assignments will be clarified further. It was reiterated that this year, the Council will stay away from controversial bills.

It was pointed out that some bills that may be of interest to the Council or are already being heard as follows:

K. Aumer – HB 624 on School-based psychologists. It seeks to create a school psychologist working group to recommend actionable items or proposed legislation for an immediate pathway to licensure for school psychologist. The stand of DOE is unknown.

L. Dias – HB1073 requiring the DOE to implement dyslexia-sensitive universal screening.

R. Reyno – SB474 requiring DCR psychologists to obtain licensure within 10 years from date of employment instead of 2 years. The HPA opposed on grounds that it lowers qualifications for those who treat prisoners. DCR has 3 psychologists on staff, and only one licensed. It has 20 openings.

III. New Business

A. Review of Bill and Testimony Preparation

Assessment of past years' procedures and expectations for reviewing bills and providing testimonies and recommending updates and improvements.

In addition to discussions under Old Business, L. Dias, as a new committee member, sought clarification on what is expected of committee members. M.P. Waterhouse explained that staff, C. Weygan-Hildebrand, will track identified bills by subject matters and will let members know now that she knows who is assigned. The person assigned will take the lead in trying to study the detail of the bills. The Committee will not come up with any kind of positions and recommendations yet because a lot of bills are expected to drop off between now and February 7 meeting, and the Council is not going to meet until February 11. C. Weygan-Hildebrand shared that the Committee is starting off with the Mental Health Task Force bills plus the CAMHD and AMHD bills, if they are not listed in the Task Force list. Any bills to be added can be emailed. When the Committee meets again and revisit the various bills, a list of bills for the State Council can be packaged. Committee members assigned to a bill will do the heavy lifting in crafting testimonies. K. Aumer highlighted the desire to have the opportunity to provide testimony in a timely fashion, either written or in-person based of what the Council wants. K. Aumer added that assigned members can also investigate other groups that are involved in the same themes. L. Dias clarified who will be tracking the bills and it was clarified that Carolyn will and will be sending the bills that members need to investigate further depending on the subject area. C. Weygan-Hildebrand explained that Council testimonies are submitted when bills have stayed essentially the same. In cases where bills have changes, and testimonies must be ironed out further, the Council can get a little behind because of the Council meets only once a month. K. Aumer commented that a lot could have been

covered to inform this meeting, but the January Council meeting was canceled. She asked if there is anything that can be changed in the future if such a situation happens again.

B. Legislative Resolution Update

Review next steps, if any, for a legislative resolution that seeks to facilitate the hiring of State mental health care workers.

M.P. Waterhouse reminded that the Council was advised to hold off on the proposed resolution because a DOH draft bill to address the issue might be included in the Governor's package. It appears that the bill was not approved so the resolution will be revisited. Unlike the bills, the Council is not up against any pressing deadline currently.

K. Aumer also clarified that the Council wanted to hear about pay rates from the rate studies. This is connected to this resolution because high cost of living is one of the reasons why Hawaii is having a hard time recruiting people.

M.P. Waterhouse also reminded that the Council wanted to hear from DHRD. Because the Council meeting schedule for presenters is already full and tight, staff will invite DHRD to one of the Committee meetings instead.

IV. Community Input

R. Reyno provided input as recorded above.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.