



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR

July 16, 2009

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, President  
and Members of the Senate  
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Madam President and Members of the Senate:

Re: House Bill No. 1362 HD1 SD2

On July 15, 2009, House Bill No. 1362, entitled "A Bill for an Act Relating to Genetic Counselors" became law without my signature, pursuant to Section 16 of Article III of the State Constitution.

The purpose of this bill is to establish a genetic counseling licensure program within the Department of Health.

In 2006 an analysis by the State Auditor concluded that establishing a licensing program for this profession is largely about title protection. It gives licensed individuals the ability to use the title but does not prohibit the practice by unlicensed practitioners. This bill prohibits unlicensed individuals from using the title "genetic counselor" or "licensed genetic counselor," but it would not prohibit them from offering services. It should also be noted that licensing would not impact the commercial marketing of DNA testing and counseling, especially at-home genetic self-testing, which is a growing industry.

While the bill calls for fees to be assessed to defray the cost of the license requirement, the cost of initial implementation is not funded and will have to be covered by the Department of Health when the program is implemented in 2011.

Genetic counselors provide valuable services to individuals and families with health issues who need to understand their family's health history.

In the interim, until this bill becomes law, should individuals in need of services seek knowledge about a genetic counselor's qualifications, they can consult the American Board of Genetic Counseling, which serves as the credentialing organization for the genetic counseling profession in the United States and Canada.

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, President  
and Members of the Senate  
Page 2

For the foregoing reasons, I allowed House Bill No. 1362 to become law as Act 191,  
effective July 15, 2009, without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Lingle", with a stylized flourish at the end.

LINDA LINGLE