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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RURAL PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TRAINING.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is a severe  
2 shortage of primary care health providers in the state, which  
3 threatens the health of our residents and affects health care  
4 costs. This shortage has pushed the federal government to  
5 designate a number of areas in the state, particularly rural  
6 areas, as medically underserved areas, health professional  
7 shortage areas, or as having medically underserved populations.

8           The legislature further finds that family physicians are  
9 well-suited to rural health care due to the broad scope of their  
10 practice, which encompasses inpatient, outpatient, and nursing  
11 home settings, and addresses acute, chronic, and preventive  
12 health across the life cycle. Many family physicians also  
13 provide maternity care, family planning, and mental health  
14 services through their practices.

15           The University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine  
16 currently offers a three-year residency program in family  
17 medicine. The program emphasizes a system-based and  
18 interdisciplinary team approach to health care. The mission of

1 the family medicine residency program is to meet the needs of  
2 rural and medically underserved areas and populations in Hawaii  
3 in a culturally sensitive and medically appropriate manner.  
4 Family medicine program residents provide not only health care  
5 but also education and outreach at schools and community events.  
6 Presently, family medicine program residents spend two months in  
7 a federally-funded rural health care training demonstration  
8 project, initiated in Hilo in 2006, in which residents learn how  
9 to provide health care to medically underserved patients in  
10 rural areas as they rotate among private physician offices,  
11 emergency departments, and the community, providing outreach and  
12 education. It is anticipated that the Hilo rural health  
13 training program will be duplicated on Kauai. Additional  
14 training sites will be developed in conjunction with the health  
15 master planning process underway on Maui and with the hospital  
16 and community health center system on Kauai. As these sites are  
17 being developed, the curriculum can be structured so that family  
18 medicine residents have the opportunity to rotate to neighbor  
19 island sites other than Hilo.

20 The purpose of this Act is to increase access to primary  
21 health care services provided by family physicians or residents  
22 in the family medicine residency program at the University of

1 Hawaii to medically underserved residents in rural areas of the  
2 state by appropriating funds to:

3 (1) Support and expand the family medicine residency  
4 program of the University of Hawaii John A. Burns  
5 school of medicine's department of family medicine and  
6 community health to provide rural primary health care  
7 services; and

8 (2) Develop a permanent statewide rural primary health  
9 care training program in each county, beginning in the  
10 county of Hawaii, to expand the rural health care  
11 training available for individuals in the family  
12 medicine residency program of the University of Hawaii  
13 John A. Burns school of medicine.

14 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1 or so much thereof  
16 as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009-2010 to support and  
17 expand the family medicine residency program at the University  
18 of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine's department of  
19 family medicine and community health to provide rural primary  
20 health care services.

21 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
22 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1 or so much thereof

1 as may be necessary for fiscal year 2010-2011 to develop a  
2 statewide rural primary health care training program in each  
3 county, beginning in the county of Hawaii to provide family  
4 physicians to rural areas and improve health care access for the  
5 people of Hawaii.

6 SECTION 4. The sums appropriated shall be expended by the  
7 University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine for the  
8 purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.

**Report Title:**

Primary Health Care; Rural Areas

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to develop a statewide rural primary health care training program and support the family medicine residency program of the University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine's department of family medicine and community health.  
(SD2)