

MAR 12 2012

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO PROMOTE  
WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAMS.

1           WHEREAS, in an environment of rising health care costs,  
2 local and national policymakers, insurers, and employers are  
3 expressing an interest in improving health while lowering costs;  
4 and

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6           WHEREAS, sixty percent of Americans receive health  
7 insurance through an employment-based plan, and health insurance  
8 in the United States is expected to continue to be employer-  
9 based; and

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11           WHEREAS, because many employees in the United States spend  
12 a majority of their waking hours in the workplace, the workplace  
13 has become a venue for investments in health; and

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15           WHEREAS, large employers adopting wellness programs see a  
16 substantial return on investment within a few years, with  
17 medical costs falling approximately \$3.27 for every dollar spent  
18 on wellness programs and absentee day costs falling  
19 approximately \$2.73 for every dollar spent; and

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21           WHEREAS, insurers also largely support wellness incentives  
22 -- sixty-six percent of insurers reported being somewhat or very  
23 likely to provide incentives for health enhancing behaviors; and

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25           WHEREAS, comprehensive worksite health promotion programs  
26 recommended by the Institute of Medicine's Healthy People 2010  
27 include health education, worksite screenings linked to  
28 appropriate medical care, and integration of the wellness  
29 program into corporate culture; and

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31           WHEREAS, workplace wellness programs with positive returns  
32 on investments include health risk assessments in the form of  
33 surveys that gather self-reported health data from employees  
34 which are then used by the employer to tailor interventions, and



1 clinical screenings of risk factors that can motivate employee  
2 participation; and

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4 WHEREAS, workplace wellness programs that do not use health  
5 risk assessments may feature an on-site gymnasium or exercise  
6 facility that employees are encouraged to utilize; and

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8 WHEREAS, wellness intervention provisions can include self-  
9 help education materials, health counseling with a health care  
10 professional, or on-site group activities; and

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12 WHEREAS, wellness intervention provisions can also focus on  
13 the top two causes of preventable death, obesity and smoking, as  
14 well as other risk factors including stress management,  
15 nutrition, and preventative care; and

16  
17 WHEREAS, there are numerous benefits for employees and  
18 employers when workplace wellness programs are adopted,  
19 including long-term health benefits to employees, increased  
20 productivity, lower replacement costs due to absenteeism, and  
21 incentives for new workers; now, therefore,

22  
23 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth  
24 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2012,  
25 that the Department of Health and the Department of Labor and  
26 Industrial Relations are requested to conduct a study to promote  
27 workplace wellness programs; and

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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include direct  
30 subsidies or easing of regulatory barriers for large and small  
31 companies who adopt workplace wellness programs, methods of  
32 improving long-term health outcomes for employees, and methods  
33 of reducing medical costs and health insurance premiums for  
34 employers in Hawaii; and

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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health and  
37 the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations are requested  
38 to submit a report on the study, including findings,  
39 recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to the  
40 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
41 the Regular Session of 2013; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and the  
3 Director of Labor and Industrial Relations.  
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OFFERED BY:

*Malame Jim*  
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*Albert Keli*  
*or*  
*transmitted*

