

MAR 14 2012

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO EXPAND THE INCOME
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STATE'S SECTION 1115
WAIVER PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, in 1994, Hawaii implemented QUEST, a statewide
2 section 1115 Medicaid waiver program, which offers expanded
3 access and benefits to children and non-disabled adults with
4 incomes below three hundred per cent of the federal poverty
5 level; and
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7 WHEREAS, in 1996, the State made several significant
8 changes that restricted enrollment in the QUEST program and
9 implemented an enrollment cap of one hundred twenty-five
10 thousand people for all QUEST programs; and
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12 WHEREAS, in 1996, the State also reinstated the Medicaid
13 resource test in a new safety net program called QUEST-Net,
14 which serves those who became ineligible for QUEST due to the
15 asset limit; and
16

17 WHEREAS, the State required self-employed QUEST enrollees
18 and their spouses to pay a monthly premium, and QUEST-Net
19 enrollees with household incomes above one hundred per cent of
20 the federal poverty level and who are nineteen years of age or
21 older to pay the full QUEST-Net monthly premium; and
22

23 WHEREAS, in 1998, the State lowered the eligibility level
24 for QUEST to one hundred per cent of the federal poverty level,
25 with the exception of pregnant women and children, and expanded
26 QUEST-Net to include all individuals who lost eligibility for
27 Medicaid or for QUEST; and
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29 WHEREAS, the QUEST-Net program only covers approximately
30 two hundred twenty adults with incomes between two hundred and
31 three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level, only a
32 portion of adults with incomes at this level; and
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1 WHEREAS, as of February 1, 2008, the federal poverty level
2 for the QUEST-Net adult population was changed from three
3 hundred per cent to two hundred percent; and
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5 WHEREAS, while Hawaii was scaling back eligibility levels,
6 other states were exploring ways to provide health insurance to
7 those uninsured whose incomes are too high to qualify them for
8 public programs, and who do not have access to or cannot afford
9 private insurance; for example, the State of New Jersey raised
10 its State Children's Health Insurance Program eligibility
11 requirement to three hundred fifty per cent of the federal
12 poverty level; and
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14 WHEREAS, in Hawaii, it is believed that families earning
15 over three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level are
16 more likely to have access to employer sponsored health
17 insurance, and since it is not the intent of QUEST to replace
18 health coverage currently provided by employers for dependents,
19 a three hundred per cent federal poverty level ceiling seems
20 reasonable; and
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22 WHEREAS, since the inflation of health care costs, which
23 are growing at a faster rate than incomes, put families with
24 children at severe risk for foregoing medical care, it is time
25 for Hawaii to plan, execute, and maintain health insurance
26 expansions, as well as to improve the availability and
27 affordability of health care coverage; now, therefore,
28

29 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth
30 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2012,
31 that the Department of Human Services is requested to expand the
32 income eligibility requirement for the State's section 1115
33 waiver program, as the waiver was granted to Hawaii in 1994 to
34 raise medicaid eligibility to three hundred percent of the
35 federal poverty level; and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
38 Services is requested to report back its progress on the
39 expansion of the section 1115 waiver program to the Legislature
40 no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2013
41 Regular Session; and
42



S.R. NO. 66

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 2 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Director of Human
 3 Services, and the Hawaii Health Authority.
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OFFERED BY: *J. L. H.*
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Clarence K. Dickerson

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