

---

---

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that falls and fall-  
2 related injuries among the elderly impact individuals, families,  
3 the community, and the State's health care system. Fall  
4 prevention is a major concern for the safety and well-being of  
5 the State's elderly residents, the fastest growing segment of  
6 Hawaii's population.

7           Falls are the leading cause of fatal injuries, an average  
8 of forty-four per cent, and injury-related hospitalizations, an  
9 average of eighty-three per cent, among the elderly in Hawaii.  
10 On average, every five hours in Hawaii an elderly person is  
11 injured so severely in a fall that hospitalization is necessary.  
12 Falls among Hawaii's elderly also result in a yearly average of  
13 eighty-two deaths and nearly one thousand eight hundred  
14 hospitalizations.

15           The legislature further finds that hospital costs  
16 associated with fall-related injuries average over \$65,000,000  
17 each year. This total cost does not include the additional  
18 significant costs associated with skilled nursing care and



1 rehabilitation. Among Hawaii seniors hospitalized for a fall,  
2 forty-three per cent are discharged to skilled nursing  
3 facilities for additional care, and twelve per cent are moved to  
4 rehabilitation facilities.

5 The legislature additionally finds that access to fall  
6 prevention services and programs would significantly reduce  
7 these costs. In addition, the early detection of fall  
8 occurrences would reduce both costs and suffering by expediting  
9 treatment, minimizing serious long-term consequences, reducing  
10 the extent of the injury, and in some instances, avoiding death.

11 Though falls among the elderly are a significant public  
12 health issue, currently, there are insufficient resources to  
13 develop a coordinated statewide approach to reduce and promptly  
14 detect falls among the elderly. The legislature therefore finds  
15 that the department of health's emergency medical services and  
16 injury prevention system branch should be required to establish  
17 and maintain a program dedicated to fall prevention and early  
18 detection for the elderly. This program shall serve as a focal  
19 point for statewide injury prevention and detection efforts to  
20 ensure multidisciplinary support, coordination of prevention and  
21 detection efforts, and continuity of implementation and  
22 accountability.



1 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of  
2 health's emergency medical services and injury prevention system  
3 branch to establish and maintain a statewide fall prevention and  
4 early detection program and to make an appropriation for this  
5 program.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
7 amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately  
8 designated and to read as follows:

9 "§321- Fall prevention and early detection program. (a)

10 The department of health shall establish and maintain, within  
11 the emergency medical services and injury prevention system  
12 branch, a fall prevention and early detection program to serve  
13 as a focal point for statewide injury prevention and detection  
14 efforts. The department may dedicate a position to fall  
15 prevention and early detection in support of this program.

16 (b) The statewide fall prevention and early detection  
17 program shall develop a statewide approach to falls among the  
18 elderly by:

19 (1) Investigating and examining the immediate and long-  
20 term dangers of fall injuries on the elderly;

21 (2) Examining the fiscal impact of falls by the elderly on  
22 the State's medical system and health care costs;



1       (3) Recommending appropriate interventions and prevention  
2       programs to reduce falls by the elderly;

3       (4) Investigating and implementing the most effective  
4       means to enhance public awareness that falls are  
5       preventable;

6       (5) Reviewing and developing the potential for increasing  
7       for the elderly and their caregivers, on a statewide  
8       basis, the availability and accessibility of fall  
9       prevention programs that effectively use community  
10       resources;

11       (6) Recommending measures that will promote early  
12       detection of falls, particularly for those who live  
13       alone or in circumstances where the likelihood of not  
14       being discovered soon after a fall is great; and

15       (7) Investigating and recommending the best way to expand  
16       the role of medical and health care professionals in  
17       screening, educating, and referring the elderly to  
18       fall prevention and early detection services and  
19       programs.

20       For purposes of this subsection, the statewide fall  
21       prevention and early detection program shall collaborate with  
22       interested stakeholders, including health care facilities,



1 community coalitions, government agencies, and organizations  
2 concerned with protecting the elderly and preventing and  
3 detecting elderly falls.

4 (c) The department shall submit a report to the  
5 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
6 each regular session, beginning with the regular session of  
7 2015, on the statewide fall prevention and early detection  
8 program, describing the progress made in implementing subsection  
9 (b), including the review of fall prevention data and the impact  
10 of falls by the elderly on the State's medical system and health  
11 care costs.

12 (d) For the purposes of this section, "the elderly" means  
13 persons who are age sixty-five or older."

14 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so  
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2013-2014 and  
17 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
18 year 2014-2015 for the department of health's emergency medical  
19 services and injury prevention system branch to establish and  
20 maintain a statewide fall prevention and early detection  
21 program.

1           The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
2 of health for the purposes of this Act.

3           SECTION 4.   New statutory material is underscored.

4           SECTION 5.   This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2030.



**Report Title:**

Kupuna Caucus; DOH; Statewide Fall Prevention and Early Detection Program; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a Fall Prevention and Early Detection Program within Department of Health's Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch. Appropriates unspecified sums for FY 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Effective July 1, 2030. (SB105 HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

