

JAN 17 2014

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. Homelessness is a complex issue that requires a
2 comprehensive and collaborative approach among public, private,
3 nonprofit, and other community stakeholders to provide services
4 and resources to homeless individuals and families, and to
5 prevent homelessness. Act 279, Session Laws of Hawaii 1992,
6 established the Hale Kokua project, a two-year homeless
7 assistance pilot project within the Hawaii housing authority to
8 provide incentives and assistance to private homeowners in the
9 city and county of Honolulu who set aside existing dwelling
10 units, or construct new or improve existing dwelling units, for
11 rental for a period of five years by families or individuals
12 classified as homeless under the project.

13 Subsequently, Act 167, Session Laws of Hawaii 1998,
14 established the Hale Kokua program within the housing and
15 community development corporation of Hawaii to address the issue
16 of homelessness by providing housing and job-training for the
17 State's homeless population. This homeless assistance program
18 authorized the payment of a state grant and monthly rent



1 supplement to interested property owners who set aside existing
2 rental space or made improvements or constructed adjoining or
3 separate dwelling units to rent the units to families or
4 individuals classified as employed but homeless under the
5 program. The Hale Kokua program was subsequently placed under
6 the Hawaii public housing authority by Act 180, Session Laws of
7 Hawaii 2006; however, the program was later repealed by Act 89,
8 Session Laws of Hawaii 2010.

9 The legislature finds that homelessness continues to be one
10 of the primary challenges in the State. According to the
11 Homelessness Research Institute, Hawaii has the highest rate of
12 homeless per capita of any state with about forty-five homeless
13 individuals out of every ten thousand.

14 The purpose of this Act is to assist homeless families and
15 individuals in the State by establishing the Hale Kokua program
16 within the department of human services.

17 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
18 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and
19 to read as follows:

20 **"PART XX. HALE KOKUA PROGRAM**

21 **§346- Definitions.** As used in this part, unless the
22 context clearly requires otherwise:



1 "Administrator" means the state homeless section
2 administrator.

3 "Employed but homeless" means any person who is homeless as
4 defined in section 346-361 and:

- 5 (1) Is employed at least nineteen hours per week; or
- 6 (2) Participates in an employment training program and
7 does volunteer work for a total of nineteen hours per
8 week until employment can be found.

9 **§346- Hale Kokua program; established.** There is
10 established, within the department, a homeless assistance
11 program known as the Hale Kokua program, to provide incentives
12 and assistance to homeowners throughout the State who set aside
13 existing dwelling units for rental for a period of five years by
14 families or individuals classified as employed but homeless;
15 provided that the family or individual shall be:

- 16 (1) Unrelated to the homeowner who sets aside any dwelling
17 unit for rental under this part; and
- 18 (2) Registered in the State of Hawaii Homeless Management
19 Information System.

20 The department shall administer the Hale Kokua program and adopt
21 the standards and framework necessary to implement the program.

22 The program shall be headed by the administrator.



1 **§346- Powers and duties.** (a) The department may
2 contract with private sector agencies to carry out the duties
3 and responsibilities of the program.

4 Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, any
5 contracts entered into by the department with a private sector
6 agency pursuant to this subsection shall not be subject to
7 chapters 76 and 89.

8 (b) The duties of the department or contracted agency
9 shall include:

- 10 (1) Carrying out the requirements of the Hale Kokua
11 program under this part;
- 12 (2) Developing and adopting the requirements, eligibility,
13 registration, background check, initial screening
14 procedures, and procedures for follow-up after
15 placement to determine the ability to make rental
16 payments and the need for social services and
17 referrals for homeless families and individuals to
18 qualify them as tenants under this program;
- 19 (3) Developing and adopting the requirements, which shall
20 include a background check, qualifications, and
21 registration procedures for property owners who
22 provide rental housing to qualified homeless tenants;



- 1 (4) Developing appropriate procedures to address potential
2 liabilities of the State;
- 3 (5) Adopting procedures to place qualified homeless
4 tenants with property owners participating in the
5 program. Participating property owners shall
6 interview and make final tenant selection from lists
7 of prospective tenants compiled by the department or
8 the contracted agency;
- 9 (6) Establishing the procedures and requirements for the
10 disbursement of rental subsidies and the amounts
11 thereof to property owners participating in the
12 program;
- 13 (7) Working with the counties to develop and propose
14 uniform incentives to encourage and facilitate the
15 participation of property owners;
- 16 (8) Monitoring the financial status and progress of
17 homeless tenants in the program and cooperating with
18 other agencies in establishing and coordinating job
19 training and other programs to help tenants to
20 progress toward self-sufficiency;
- 21 (9) Promoting and assisting in the development of
22 employer-employee relationships between homeless



1 operation of shelters and other facilities to aid the homeless
2 in the tract. The department or contracted agency shall notify
3 prospective participants registered on the waiting list in each
4 census tract of the opportunity to participate in the program as
5 these opportunities may arise in each tract.

6 (b) Assistance to any qualified property owner providing
7 rental housing to any homeless tenant under this part for a
8 period of five years shall include at least one of the
9 following:

- 10 (1) The payment of a monthly state rent subsidy to
11 supplement the monthly rental payments made by the
12 homeless tenant;
- 13 (2) Real property tax rate waivers or reductions proposed
14 by the department and approved by the council of the
15 county in which the property is located; or
- 16 (3) Other incentives consistent with the purposes of this
17 part to assist in the participation of property owners
18 under the program.

19 **§346- Availability of funding.** All rental subsidies and
20 payments allocated by the program under this part shall be
21 subject to the availability of funds."



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 to:

- 4 (1) Establish one full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE)
5 permanent state homeless section administrator in the
6 department of human services to head and oversee the
7 Hale Kokua program;
- 8 (2) Implement the Hale Kokua program; and
- 9 (3) Carry out the purposes of this Act.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
11 human services for the purposes of this Act.

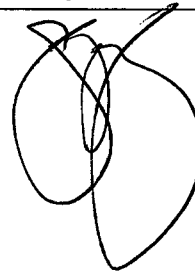
12 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;
13 provided that section 3 shall take effect on July 1, 2014.

14

INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 2534

Report Title:

Homeless; Hale Kokua Program; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Hale Kokua Program, within the Department of Human Services to incentivize homeowners statewide to set aside dwelling units for rental by families or individuals classified as employed but homeless. Appropriates funds.

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