
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. Hawaii has a shortage of physicians, compared
2 to populations of a similar size and demographic found elsewhere
3 in the United States. Rising demand within the health care
4 system of Hawaii due to population growth, aging, and the
5 prevalence of chronic diseases calls for an increase in the
6 existing physician base. Studies of the physician workforce in
7 Hawaii demonstrate extreme shortages of primary care
8 specialties, most notably in rural areas. Access to a personal
9 physician is shown to decrease morbidity and mortality and to
10 control health care costs. Physician access promotes early
11 detection and careful management of chronic diseases, deferral
12 of unnecessary hospital admissions, and avoidance of unnecessary
13 emergency department visits.

14 Despite this shortage, many medical students graduate with
15 considerable educational debt and are obligated to choose a non-
16 primary care specialty with higher compensation to repay their
17 student loans. In addition, many of the practicing physicians
18 in Hawaii are approaching retirement age, suggesting a further



1 contraction in the existing available physician workforce. As
2 the United States adopts an accountable care organization model
3 largely built upon primary care providers, the competition to
4 recruit new primary care providers will increase. Financial
5 support of a family medicine residency training program will
6 enable the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine
7 to increase its number of resident positions as well as begin
8 steps to implement a family medicine program on Kauai or in
9 North Hawaii.

10 The purpose of this Act is to address the shortage of
11 physicians in Hawaii, starting with family medicine primary care
12 physicians for rural Oahu and neighbor island communities in the
13 State, by making an appropriation for graduate medical
14 education.

15 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for
18 medical resident positions in rural Oahu and neighbor island
19 communities and the following associated costs:



- 1 (1) Increases in faculty and infrastructure of the
2 existing University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of
3 Medicine, Family Medicine Residency Program; and
4 (2) Development of new accredited family health centers in
5 association with teaching hospitals.

6 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of
7 Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine for the purposes of this
8 Act.

9 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

John A. Burns School of Medicine; Physician Shortage;
Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the John A. Burns School of Medicine to fund medical residency programs to help alleviate the shortage of primary care physicians in rural Oahu and neighbor island communities. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

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