SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF USING MEDICAID FUNDS TO PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR THE TREATMENT FOR HOMELESSNESS.

WHEREAS, homelessness continues to be one of the State's most significant and challenging social problems; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2016 Hawaii Statewide Homeless Point-In-Time conducted in January 2016, there are 7,921 homeless individuals in the State, an overall increase of four percent from 2015; and

WHEREAS, homeless persons face a myriad of issues, including general health issues, mental illness, substance abuse, loss of employment and income, and a lack of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, many people who experience homelessness have high health care needs and costs; and

WHEREAS, for many of these individuals with complex health conditions, housing instability can be a significant barrier to regular health care access, which results in excessive use of expensive emergency department, inpatient treatment, and crisis services; and

WHEREAS, by recognizing the importance of housing stability within the practice of health care for homeless individuals and exploring creative and innovative solutions to address homeless individuals' health care needs through housing stability from traditional and non-traditional resources, the State may be able to recover the costs that homeless individuals incur over their lifetime; now, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Auditor is requested to conduct a study to assess the impact of using Medicaid funds to provide coverage for treatment for homelessness, including the costs to provide coverage for the chronically homeless population in the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Auditor is requested, when conducting the study, to take into consideration the coverage for treatment for homelessness to include:

(1) Behavioral health services, including mental health and substance abuse services;

(2) Case management;

(3) Personal care and personal assistance services;

(4) Home and community-based services; and

(5) Housing services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Auditor is requested to submit findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2018; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Auditor and Director of Human Services.