
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP
TO EXAMINE PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES AND DEVELOP
RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXPAND PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES IN
HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, palliative care specializes in the management of
2 physical symptoms, including nausea, pain, fatigue, and
3 shortness of breath, as well as the emotional and spiritual
4 distress caused by serious, chronic, or terminal conditions; and
5

6 WHEREAS, palliative care is defined by the World Health
7 Organization as an approach that improves the quality of life of
8 patients and their families facing the problems associated with
9 life-threatening illness through the prevention and relief of
10 suffering by means of early identification and impeccable
11 assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical,
12 psychosocial, and spiritual; and
13

14 WHEREAS, studies have shown that patients who had hospital-
15 based palliative care visits spent less time in intensive care
16 units and were less likely to be readmitted to the hospital
17 after returning home; and
18

19 WHEREAS, in 2000, less than twenty-five percent of
20 hospitals in the United States had a palliative care program,
21 but by 2015, sixty-seven percent of hospitals in the country
22 with fifty or more beds reported having palliative care teams;
23 and
24

25 WHEREAS, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
26 advocates for policies that improve the lives of cancer patients
27 by making treatment of pain and other symptoms and coordination
28 of patient care standard protocol throughout a patient's
29 treatment for cancer, starting at the point of diagnosis; and



1 WHEREAS, Kōkua Mau, Hawaii's hospice and palliative care
2 organization, is a community benefit, nonprofit organization,
3 composed of individual and organizational champions and
4 supporters from hospitals, education, consumers, insurance,
5 long-term care, and hospices; and

6
7 WHEREAS, efforts to increase the use and availability of
8 palliative care services in Hawaii require public health care
9 providers, advocates, and facilities to come together and
10 discuss the challenges and issues faced by palliative care
11 programs; and

12
13 WHEREAS, the Department of Health, Kōkua Mau, American
14 Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, and other community
15 partners are all committed to improving the quality of life
16 through palliative care for people in Hawaii; now, therefore,

17
18 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth
19 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018, the
20 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
21 Health is requested to convene a working group, with the
22 assistance of Kōkua Mau and the American Cancer Society Cancer
23 Action Network, to examine palliative care services and develop
24 recommendations to expand palliative care services in the State;
25 and

26
27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
28 to collaborate with hospice and palliative care organizations,
29 healthcare associations, health care facilities, insurers,
30 patient advocacy groups, and other interested public health
31 groups; and

32
33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
34 to examine and identify:

- 35
36 (1) The current state of palliative care services offered
37 in Hawaii;
38
39 (2) The capacity of current palliative care providers;
40
41 (3) The geographic areas where significant gaps in
42 palliative care services exist;



- 1 (4) Opportunities to collaborate with key stakeholders who
2 are positioned to craft a strategy and plan for
3 improving and expanding the provision of high-quality
4 palliative medicine and palliative care services in
5 Hawaii;
6
- 7 (5) The feasibility for financial support of a long-term
8 expansion of palliative care services in Hawaii;
9
- 10 (6) A plan for ongoing data gathering for purposes of
11 monitoring and quality improvement of palliative care
12 in Hawaii;
13
- 14 (7) Engagement strategies for educating the public about
15 palliative care and hospice care to empower people to
16 make informed decisions about wishes for care when
17 faced with a serious illness; and
18
- 19 (8) Any other strategies that would improve palliative
20 care services in Hawaii; and
21

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
23 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
24 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
25 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
26 of 2019; and
27

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that subsequent to the submission of
29 its report to the Legislature, the working group may convene
30 annually or as necessary to discuss and update its findings and
31 recommendations; and
32

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health,
35 Executive Director of Kōkua Mau, and Director of the American
36 Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

