A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO LICENSED CRISIS RESIDENTIAL SHELTERS.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the lack of Licensed Crisis Residential Shelters in Hawaii is an issue of public concern. Currently the number of residential beds available for people experiencing a mental health crisis is extremely limited with only twenty beds on Oahu and nine beds on Hawaii Island. Having a more robust inventory of available beds would alleviate the pressure on emergency rooms and psychiatric units in medical facilities.

A Licensed Crisis Residential Shelter provides a safe place to stay for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Typical stays are from three to ten days. Licensed Crisis Residential Shelters have nurses on staff who assist with medication management and other medical needs. The shelters also provide food and housing while monitoring clients for suicidal behavior. Licensed Crisis Residential Shelters are warranted for use in cases of suicidal or homicidal ideation or intent, medication management, and symptom management.
While a crisis shelter is not a permanent fix for housing individuals who have mental illnesses, it provides "housing first" for stabilization and the opportunity for clients to be linked to human services during their stay. Licensed Crisis Residential Shelters would be a financial benefit to the State by lowering the costs of emergency medical services in hospitals. Licensed Crisis Residential Shelters also have the potential to lower the rates of suicide, homicide, and drug overdoses, as well as improve the lives of countless individuals who may not otherwise have access to crisis services.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the Department of Health's Adult Mental Health Division for Licensed Crisis Residential Shelters and increase the number of beds and facilities available in the State.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so much thereof as may be necessary for the fiscal year 2019-2020 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 to increase the number of available beds at licensed crisis residential shelters statewide.
The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of health for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

INTRODUCED BY:

[Signatures of legislators]

JAN 24 2019
Report Title:
Crisis Residential Shelter; Mental Health; Appropriation

Description:
Appropriates funds to increase the number of residential beds available for those experiencing mental health crisis. Gives the department of health the funds to expand these programs to all counties.

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