A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TEACHING HOSPITALS.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii faces a growing shortage of physicians to provide direct care to patients. The Hawaii physician workforce project reported in October 2018 that Hawaii had a shortage of five hundred thirteen full-time equivalent positions. When adjusted for island geography and unmet specialty-specific needs by county, the estimated unmet need for physicians was seven hundred ninety-seven positions, an increase from seven hundred sixty-nine positions in the previous year.

The largest shortage statewide and on all islands is primary care. The largest subspecialty shortages statewide, by per cent of estimated unmet need are: infectious disease, pathology, colorectal surgery, neurosurgery, and pulmonology.

In the county of Hawaii, there is a one hundred per cent shortage of physicians in colorectal surgery, infectious diseases, and neonatal-perinatal subspecialties.
The legislature further finds that a teaching hospital on Hawaii island may help to attract and retain a high-quality, diverse physician workforce to the State. Teaching hospitals provide a rich training ground for future medical professionals across specialties. As a result, patients facing serious and routine illnesses would no longer be forced to leave the island or State to gain access to the best available, appropriate, and innovative care.

In addition, teaching hospitals facilitate valuable care and better outcomes for patients. The County of Hawaii has a large and medically underserved rural community. The residential population of Hawaii island is one of the fastest growing populations in the State. The county welcomes a large number of domestic and international visitors throughout the year. A teaching hospital will provide a broader and more complete network of care for these individuals.

In 2016, the legislature recognized the potential benefits of a teaching hospital on Hawaii island by appropriating $500,000 for a feasibility study for a teaching hospital in Kona. The appropriated funds lapsed prior to the initiation of the study.
The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to study the impact and feasibility of creating a teaching hospital on west Hawaii island.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $500,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 to study the impact and feasibility of creating a teaching hospital on west Hawaii island.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.
Report Title:
Teaching Hospital; West Hawaii; John A. Burns School of Medicine

Description:
 Appropriates funds to the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii to study the impact and feasibility of creating a teaching hospital on West Hawaii.

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