
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii is
2 consistently ranked among the top states for overall health,
3 including metrics that track the rate of uninsured individuals.
4 According to both U.S. News and WalletHub's annual state
5 rankings for 2017, Hawaii ranked first in the nation in overall
6 health. According to United Health Foundation's annual state
7 rankings for 2017, Hawaii was ranked second in overall health.
8 According to the federal Census Bureau's "Health Insurance
9 Coverage in the United States: 2016" report, Hawaii had the
10 second lowest percentage of uninsured persons in 2016 with only
11 3.5 per cent of the Hawaii population being uninsured.

12 The legislature further finds that these excellent rankings
13 are most attributable to Hawaii's Prepaid Health Care Act of
14 1974. The Prepaid Health Care Act was drafted per the
15 recommendations of a 1971 Legislative Reference Bureau report,
16 authored by Professor Stefan A. Reisenfeld, that estimated
17 Hawaii's health care coverage gap to range from eleven per cent



1 to nineteen per cent, depending on the type of insurance and
2 population estimate. Based on Professor Reisenfeld's
3 recommendations, Hawaii's Prepaid Health Care Act requires that:

- 4 (1) Every regular employee in private employment shall
5 have access to a prepaid plan providing for hospital,
6 surgical, and medical benefits;
- 7 (2) The level of benefits provided conform with the
8 prevailing community standards;
- 9 (3) Costs are shared by the employer and the employee;
- 10 (4) The system does not interfere with the collective
11 bargaining process or interfere with the services
12 provided pursuant to such collective bargaining
13 agreements; and
- 14 (5) The mandate that employers provide coverage is coupled
15 with a plan for premium supplementation from general
16 revenues.

17 Enacted after years of negotiation, the Prepaid Health Care
18 Act made Hawaii the first state to have an employer mandate,
19 which requires certain employers to provide health insurance to
20 qualified employees. As stated at the time of the Act's passage
21 in floor debate in the house of representatives, the Prepaid



1 Health Care Act embodies the concept that "every resident of
2 this State has the right to good health and good health care."

3 Additionally, the legislature finds that the State's
4 creation of MED-QUEST, under its 1115 waiver, supplemented the
5 Prepaid Health Care Act's ambition of providing access to health
6 care to all individuals in Hawaii. Due to its expansion under
7 the federal Affordable Care Act, more than three hundred
8 thousand persons have access to medical benefits through MED-
9 QUEST.

10 However, the legislature further finds that the looming
11 uncertainty in the public and private health insurance markets
12 due to instability in federal programs and the federal
13 Affordable Care Act necessitates that Hawaii continue to
14 innovate and be a pioneer in health care access.

15 The purpose of this Act is to establish a health care
16 access task force that will review relevant health care
17 policies, legislation, and authority, and make recommendations
18 to improve access to health care in Hawaii.

19 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a health care access
20 task force within the department of health for administrative
21 purposes. The health care access task force shall review health



1 care policies, legislation, and authority including but not
2 limited to:

3 (1) Nevada's Assembly Bill 374 (2017), informally known as
4 "SprinkleCare", which proposed the establishment of a
5 Nevada Care Plan to allow any state resident to
6 purchase insurance coverage through that state's
7 Medicaid program on the open market;

8 (2) Hawaii's Prepaid Health Care Act of 1974;

9 (3) United States' Senate Bill 1804 (2017), the "Medicare
10 for All Act of 2017";

11 (4) The Affordable Care Act; and

12 (5) Chapter 322H, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which
13 established the Hawaii health authority.

14 (b) The health care access task force shall consist of the
15 following members or their designees:

16 (1) The director of health, who shall serve as
17 chairperson;

18 (2) The director of human services;

19 (3) The director of the executive office on aging;

20 (4) Two members of the house of representatives appointed
21 by the speaker of the house of representatives;



1 (5) Two members of the senate appointed by the president
2 of the senate;

3 (6) The chief executive officer of Healthcare Association
4 of Hawaii;

5 (7) The director of the Institute for Human Services;

6 (8) One advocate for health care appointed by the speaker
7 of the house of representatives; and

8 (9) One advocate for health care appointed by the
9 president of the senate.

10 The members of the health care access task force shall
11 serve without compensation, and all necessary expenses,
12 including travel expenses, shall be paid by the agency,
13 organization, or department to which the member belongs. No
14 member shall be made subject to chapter 84, Hawaii Revised
15 Statutes, solely because of that member's participation as a
16 member of the task force.

17 (c) The health care access task force shall submit a
18 report of its findings and recommendations to improve access to
19 health care, including any proposed legislation, to the
20 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
21 the regular session of 2019.



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1 (d) The health care access task force shall cease to exist
2 on January 10, 2019.

3 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.
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JAN 18 2018

H.B. NO. 1896

Report Title:

Health Care; Access; Task Force

Description:

Establishes a health care access task force to review health care policies, the affordable care act, and other jurisdictions' health care legislative proposals to determine ways the state can increase access to health care.

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