
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that homelessness is one
2 of the most pressing problems in Hawai'i, which requires a
3 robust, comprehensive, long-term solution to address Hawai'i's
4 affordable housing and homelessness crisis.

5 Over the last fifty years in Hawai'i, the number of cost-
6 burdened renters, those paying more than thirty per cent of
7 their income for rent, went from less than a quarter of the
8 population to over half. High housing costs have driven more
9 and more Hawai'i residents into homelessness. Hawai'i has the
10 highest homelessness rate in the nation.

11 The legislature further finds that by making smart
12 investments in homelessness and housing, using data-driven
13 practices, and improving coordination, Hawai'i has gradually
14 begun to turn the tide in the homelessness crisis. In 2017,
15 Hawai'i's homelessness rate went down for the first time in
16 years, a trend that continued in 2018. During the Regular



1 Session of 2018, the legislature made unprecedented levels of
2 investment in low-income housing and homelessness, appropriating
3 \$200,000,000 for the rental housing revolving fund, \$30,000,000
4 for ohana zones, and \$13,500,000 for proven-effective and
5 promising homelessness programs.

6 To turn back the fifty years of growth in Hawai'i's housing
7 and homelessness crisis, investments of this scale must be made
8 consistently in the coming years. Hawai'i must prioritize
9 programs that are the most cost-effective and target the most
10 vulnerable populations, such as outreach, rapid re-housing,
11 housing first, family assessment centers, law-enforcement
12 assisted diversion, and the coordinated statewide homelessness
13 initiative. The State also needs to experiment with innovative
14 approaches to addressing homelessness, such as providing
15 shallow, long-term rent subsidies to kupuna on fixed incomes who
16 face the threat of homelessness due to rapidly rising rents.

17 The purpose of this Act is to fund core homelessness
18 services and establish a new pilot program to address the
19 State's housing and homelessness crisis.

20 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$16,300,000 or so



1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and
2 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
3 year 2020-2021 for the department of human services to fund and
4 administer the outreach program, rapid re-housing program,
5 housing first program, family assessment centers, and
6 coordinated statewide homelessness initiative.

7 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
8 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,700,000 or so much
11 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
12 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
13 2020-2021 for the department of health to fund and administer
14 the law enforcement assisted diversion program and to establish
15 and administer a long-term rental assistance pilot program.

16 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
17 of health for the purposes of this Act.

18 SECTION 4. The department of health is to establish and
19 administer a long-term rental assistance pilot program to:



- 1 (1) Provide long-term rental assistance to individuals who
- 2 are over the age of sixty who are homeless or at
- 3 imminent risk of becoming homeless;
- 4 (2) Ensure that individuals participating in the program
- 5 will not pay more than fifty per cent of their income
- 6 for rent; and
- 7 (3) Provide housing counseling and landlord assistance to
- 8 assist elders to obtain and retain permanent housing.

9 SECTION 5. (a) The department of health may merge the

10 long-term rental assistance program established pursuant to

11 section (4) of this Act with other existing programs, if in the

12 opinion of the department of health, it is efficient to do so.

13 (b) The department of health may establish rules and

14 qualification standards for beneficiaries of the long-term

15 rental assistance program.

16 (c) The department of health shall require the long-term

17 rental assistance program to participate in the Continuum of

18 Care's Coordinated Entry System for homeless services.

19 (d) The department of health shall require the provider of

20 the long-term assistance pilot program to input data into the



1 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's
2 Homeless Management Information System.

3 (e) The department of health shall submit a report to the
4 legislature of its findings and recommendations, including any
5 proposed legislation, regarding the long-term rental assistance
6 pilot program no later than one month prior to the convening of
7 the regular sessions of 2020, 2021, and 2022.

8 (f) The long-term rental assistance pilot program shall
9 cease to exist on June 30, 2022.

10 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.



Report Title:

Homelessness; Housing; Department of Health; Department of Human Services; Appropriations

Description:

Appropriates funds to the outreach program, rapid re-housing program, housing first program, family assessment centers, law enforcement assisted diversion program, and coordinated statewide homelessness initiative. Establishes and appropriates funds for a long-term rental assistance pilot program. (SD1)

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