
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO KUPUNA HOUSING.

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 Hawaii, which requires a
3 robust, comprehensive, long-term solution to address the State's
4 affordable housing and homelessness crisis. One important
5 component of the solution is ensuring that low-income kupuna are
6 not forced into homelessness through a combination of fixed
7 incomes and rapidly rising rents.

8 The legislature further finds that, over the last fifty
9 years, the number of cost-burdened renters, or those paying more
10 than thirty per cent of their income for rent, has significantly
11 increased. Today, almost half of all renters in the State pay
12 more than thirty per cent of their income for rent. High
13 housing costs have driven more and more Hawaii residents into
14 homelessness, and now the homelessness rate per capita in Hawaii
15 is among the highest in the nation.

16 The legislature additionally finds that by making smart
17 investments in homelessness and housing, using data-driven



1 practices, and improving coordination, Hawaii has gradually
2 begun to turn the tide in the homelessness crisis. In 2017,
3 Hawaii's homelessness rate went down for the first time in
4 years, a trend that continued in 2018. During the regular
5 session of 2018, the legislature made unprecedented levels of
6 investment in low-income housing and homelessness, appropriating
7 \$200,000,000 for the rental housing revolving fund, \$30,000,000
8 for ohana zones, and \$13,500,000 for proven-effective and
9 promising homelessness programs.

10 The legislature also finds that to turn back fifty years of
11 growth in Hawaii's housing and homelessness crisis, investments
12 of this scale must be made consistently in the coming years.
13 Hawaii must prioritize programs that are the most cost-effective
14 and target the most vulnerable populations, such as the State's
15 kupuna. The 2017 Homeless Service Utilization Report found that
16 there are 1,386 homeless elders in the State. Many more elders
17 face homelessness as rents skyrocket. Due to the fixed incomes
18 of elders, a state rent supplement program targeted toward
19 kupuna that expands on the existing state rent supplement
20 program administered by the Hawaii public housing authority is
21 needed.



1 The purpose of this Act is to temporarily expand the state
2 rent supplement program to specifically target qualified kupuna
3 who are sixty-two years of age or older and are homeless or at
4 imminent risk of becoming homeless and appropriate funds for
5 this purpose.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 356D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended by adding a new section to part VIII to be appropriately
8 designated and to read as follows:

9 "§356D- State rent supplement program for kupuna. (a)

10 There is established the state rent supplement program for
11 kupuna to be administered by the authority to provide state rent
12 supplement assistance and other services to qualified kupuna
13 under this section.

14 (b) The authority shall:

15 (1) Provide state rent supplement assistance specifically
16 for qualified kupuna; provided that an individual who
17 qualifies for the state rent supplement program for
18 kupuna shall participate in the Continuum of Care
19 Coordinated Entry System for homeless services;

20 (2) Provide housing counseling and landlord assistance to
21 assist qualified kupuna; and



1 (3) Coordinate with mental health services and other
2 supportive services to assist qualified kupuna in
3 obtaining or retaining permanent housing.

4 (c) The authority may enter into memoranda of agreement
5 with the counties or specialized non-profit organizations as
6 necessary to implement this section.

7 (d) The authority shall, without regard to chapter 91,
8 establish rules and qualification standards for participants of
9 the state rent supplement program for kupuna.

10 (e) The authority shall submit to the legislature an
11 annual report of its findings and recommendations regarding the
12 state rent supplement program for kupuna, including any proposed
13 legislation, no later than thirty days prior to the convening of
14 each regular session.

15 (f) As used in this section, "qualified kupuna" means an
16 individual who is sixty-two years of age or older and is
17 homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless and who
18 otherwise meets the requirements for a qualified tenant under
19 section 356D-153."

20 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so



1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
2 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
3 year 2024-2025 for the state rent supplement program for kupuna
4 established under section 356D- , Hawaii Revised Statutes,
5 including full-time equivalent (FTE) public housing
6 specialist positions within the Hawaii public housing authority;
7 provided that any funds appropriated under this section shall be
8 in addition to the base budget of the Hawaii public housing
9 authority for the state rent supplement program.

10 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii
11 public housing authority for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on December 31,
14 2050, and shall be repealed on June 30, 2026.



Report Title:

Hawaii Public Housing Authority; State Rent Supplement Program for Kupuna; Reports; Appropriation

Description:

Temporarily expands the State Rent Supplement Program to specifically target qualified individuals who are sixty-two years of age or older and are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Requires the Hawaii Public Housing Authority to submit annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 12/31/2050. Repeals 6/30/2026. (SD1)

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