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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that it is critical to  
2 achieve universal health coverage for Hawaii's residents.  
3 Hawaii's QUEST program goes a long way toward this goal.  
4 However, the program cannot handle all eligible uninsured adults  
5 and a cap has been placed on participation in the QUEST program,  
6 thus leaving out tens of thousands of eligible uninsured adults.

7           The current cap prevents many adults, especially non-  
8 pregnant women, who are income- and asset-eligible from  
9 enrolling in the program. These excluded but eligible adults  
10 are at high risk for not getting necessary primary and  
11 preventive care, not getting necessary prescription drugs, and  
12 are more likely to incur or generate unnecessary emergency room  
13 costs because of their uninsured status. Uninsured adults are a  
14 financial burden on hospitals, emergency rooms, community health  
15 care centers, and others that provide uncompensated care.

16           The legislature further finds that almost fifty-four per  
17 cent of the funds needed to cover all eligible adults under the  
18 QUEST program can be matched by the federal government. In



1 addition, the cap limit has not been raised even though more  
2 children are now eligible due to more liberal eligibility  
3 requirements for children implemented in July 2000.

4 The purpose of this Act is to progress toward universal  
5 health coverage in Hawaii by expanding enrollment in the State's  
6 QUEST program by increasing the enrollment cap from one hundred  
7 twenty-five thousand enrollees to one hundred fifty thousand  
8 enrollees.

9 SECTION 2. **QUEST maximum enrollment; rules.** (a) The  
10 director of human services shall increase maximum statewide  
11 enrollment in the State's QUEST program to one hundred fifty  
12 thousand enrollees.

13 (b) The director of human services shall immediately adopt  
14 rules to implement this section pursuant to chapter 91, Hawaii  
15 Revised Statutes; provided that the director shall have the  
16 power to issue interim rules that shall be exempt from the  
17 public notice, public hearing, and gubernatorial approval  
18 requirements of chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Any  
19 interim rules adopted under this section shall be effective for  
20 not more than eighteen months.

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



1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007, for  
2 increasing maximum enrollment in the State's QUEST program to  
3 one hundred fifty thousand enrollees.

4 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
5 human services for the purposes of this Act.

6 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval,  
7 except that section 3 shall take effect on July 1, 2006.

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INTRODUCED BY:



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JAN 25 2006



**Report Title:**

QUEST Eligibility; Enrollment Expansion; Appropriation

**Description:**

Increases maximum enrollment in QUEST program from 125,000 to 150,000. Requires DHS to immediately adopt rules, which are exempt from the public notice, public hearing, and gubernatorial approval requirements of the administrative procedure law, to implement the new cap. Appropriation of \$ .

