

JAN 25 2006

S.B. NO. 2626

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE AT-HOME INFANT CARE PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. High quality care plays an important role in a
2 child's healthy development. Quality care during the first year
3 enhances development of the child's brain and cognitive
4 abilities.

5 Unfortunately, many children spend their days in unsafe
6 settings that lack supportive, nurturing, and enriching care.
7 This is due in part to the national shortage of licensed and
8 regulated infant child care. Another factor is the high cost of
9 child care for children under two years of age, which requires
10 smaller groups of children and is more labor intensive and,
11 therefore, more costly to provide. These factors make it
12 difficult for many low-income parents to find affordable,
13 quality child care.

14 Child care subsidies for low-income parents and parents
15 receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds
16 enable them to work or participate in educational or training
17 programs. These subsidies have enabled many public assistance
18 recipients to return to the work force. Changes to welfare



1 policy relating to work requirements have made the option to
2 stay home to care for very young children impractical for many
3 low-income parents.

4 The purpose of this Act is to allow a child care subsidy
5 for qualifying parents who stay at home to care for a child
6 under two years of age.

7 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
8 amended by adding a new subpart to part VIII to be appropriately
9 designated to read as follows:

10 " **AT-HOME INFANT CHILD CARE PROGRAM**

11 **§346- At-home infant child care program.** (a) A parent
12 may receive a child care subsidy for at-home care for a child
13 under two years of age if the family:

- 14 (1) Is at or below one hundred fifty per cent of the
15 federal poverty level for the State;
- 16 (2) Has not previously received a lifetime total of
17 twenty-four months of assistance under this section;
- 18 (3) Is eligible to receive child care assistance under
19 this part; and
- 20 (4) Has fulfilled the following work requirements for at
21 least one of the three months immediately preceding
22 entry in the program:

1 (A) One hundred twenty hours for a two-parent family,
2 whether by one or both parents;

3 (B) Sixty hours for a single-parent family; or

4 (C) Forty hours for a single-parent family while the
5 parent attends post-secondary education or
6 training.

7 (b) The eligible parent shall:

8 (1) Be at least eighteen years of age or have received a
9 high school diploma or its equivalent;

10 (2) Care for the infant full time in the infant's home;
11 and

12 (3) Care for any other children in the family who are
13 eligible for child care assistance under this part.

14 (c) The maximum rate of assistance shall be equal to the
15 rate established by the department for care of infants in
16 licensed family child care settings within the State. The
17 family may not receive child care subsidies for other children
18 in the family while receiving benefits under this part.

19 (d) A participating family shall report income and other
20 family changes to the department.

21 (e) A person participating in the at-home infant child
22 care program under this part shall not forfeit any other public



1 assistance the person may be receiving. Upon leaving the
2 at-home infant child care program, a person may resume
3 participation in any other public assistance programs in which
4 the person may have been participating with the same status the
5 person had prior to participating in the at-home infant child
6 care program.

7 (f) Family members may participate in education and work
8 activities as long as one or both parents provide care full time
9 for the infant.

10 (g) The at-home infant child care program shall be
11 implemented and funded through the department, which shall:

- 12 (1) Determine appropriate funding for the program by
13 utilizing available funds;
- 14 (2) Develop and distribute consumer information on the
15 program to assist parents of infants or expectant
16 parents in making informed child care decisions; and
- 17 (3) Adopt rules in accordance with chapter 91 to implement
18 the purposes of this part.

19 (h) For the purposes of this part, "parent" means a birth
20 parent, adoptive parent, stepparent, foster parent, or legal
21 guardian.



1 (i) Assistance under this part does not establish an
2 employer-employee relationship between any member of the
3 assisted family and the State."

4 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Roy L. Hooper
Maureen R. Trompe

Carol Johnson
Joanne Chun Calland
Will Eyo
Randy H. Pol
Cherene W. Mishi
Amor Murodo Kai
Norman Sakem
Or Kanva

SB. NO. 2636

Report Title:

At-Home Infant Child Care Program

Description:

Allows qualifying TANF recipients to act as full-time at-home caregivers for children under two years of age and to receive 90-100 per cent of the childcare subsidy the State would otherwise pay for the childcare services.

