
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CAREGIVING.

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

1 SECTION 1. Caregiving has always been a universal
2 experience affecting families of all ethnicities, lifestyles,
3 and income levels. Recently, however, family caregiving has
4 become more than an act of love and familial responsibility.
5 Due to a shortage of care providers in Hawaii, family caregiving
6 has become a critical element of our health and long-term care
7 system.

8 The legislature finds that families, rather than
9 institutions, are the primary providers of long-term care for
10 older adults in the State. Twenty-eight per cent of Hawaii's
11 adult population report that they provide care or assistance to
12 a person age sixty or older. Of these individuals, twenty-nine
13 per cent provided care for a spouse or partner, and twenty-one
14 per cent cared for a parent. These numbers actually may be much
15 higher, because there may be many "hidden" caregivers in Hawaii
16 who do not identify themselves as such.

17 Caregivers are motivated to provide care to family members
18 because of the preference of the elderly to remain at home with

1 their families, and due to the high cost of institutional long-
2 term care.

3 In Hawaii, the likelihood of becoming a caregiver does not
4 vary substantially among demographic groups and socioeconomic
5 characteristics. Married persons in Hawaii are just as likely
6 to provide care to an older adult as their unmarried
7 counterparts are. Among the different ethnic groups in Hawaii,
8 native Hawaiians are most likely to provide regular care to an
9 older adult, followed by Filipinos, Japanese, and Caucasians.
10 According to national studies, women are more likely than men to
11 be primary caregivers. Women also provide higher intensities
12 and frequencies of care.

13 Sixty-five per cent of Hawaii's caregivers are employed in
14 addition to their caretaking responsibilities. To balance their
15 employment and eldercare roles, working caregivers take leaves
16 of absence, report to work late or leave early, change from
17 full-time to part-time employment, change to less demanding
18 jobs, retire early, or give up work completely. Consequently,
19 caregiving may reduce a caregiver's retirement income due to
20 reduced work hours or fewer years in the workforce, which means
21 reduced contributions to pensions, social security, and other
22 retirement savings.



1 The legislature further finds that significant changes in
2 Medicare and Medicaid health insurance programs nationally and
3 locally will impose greater responsibilities upon individuals
4 and families to be well-informed and astute about long-term care
5 planning, financing, and the options available to assist them.
6 Consumers will need expert, one-to-one counseling in
7 articulating their questions as they seek specific information
8 or help. Technology may facilitate the dissemination of
9 information, but agencies still must have the capacity to
10 explain and clarify issues and direct people to available
11 resources.

12 Hawaii is facing a growing healthcare worker shortage,
13 while health and long-term care needs continue to rise. As a
14 result of cost-containment policies and practices, people with
15 ongoing healthcare needs are being discharged from hospitals and
16 other care facilities with complex healthcare requirements and
17 facing reduced home- and community-based care options. This
18 puts the responsibility on families, who may be inadequately
19 prepared and trained, to provide such care.

20 The caregiving tradition in Hawaii will continue to be
21 challenged by changes in demographics. Birth rates, marriages,
22 single-occupant households, high costs of living, and family



1 members working outside the home or moving away from Hawaii will
2 all affect the availability of family caregivers. Hawaii must
3 also assist older adults who migrate into the State and who lack
4 a natural family support system.

5 By 2020, more than one in four individuals will be sixty
6 years old or older. The need for personal care assistance due
7 to physical, sensory, cognitive, and self-care disabilities
8 increases with age. As Hawaii's population ages, many more
9 families will be providing higher levels of long-term care to
10 frail and disabled older adults at home.

11 Hawaii's long-term care system is on a collision course
12 with the day-to-day reality of families coping with caring for
13 loved ones with chronic conditions. Without attention to this
14 situation, the \$875,000,000 in unpaid support services provided
15 by Hawaii's family caregivers may well be jeopardized when these
16 caregivers suffer from the costs that impede their ability to
17 give care. As this pattern plays itself out, the quality of
18 care provided to the frail elderly and individuals with
19 disabling or chronic conditions will diminish, and the costs to
20 Hawaii's long-term care system will skyrocket. Public policy
21 must be formulated to address these issues.



1 The purpose of this Act is to establish a joint legislative
2 committee on family caregiving.

3 SECTION 2. There is established a joint legislative
4 committee on family caregiving. The committee shall be composed
5 of eight members as follows:

6 (1) Four members of the house of representatives, three
7 members from the majority party, and one member from
8 the minority party, who shall be appointed by the
9 speaker of the house of representatives; and

10 (2) Four members of the senate, three members from the
11 majority party, and one member from the minority
12 party, who shall be appointed by the president of the
13 senate.

14 The committee shall select its own chairperson.

15 SECTION 3. (a) The joint legislative committee shall
16 develop comprehensive public policy to strengthen support for
17 family caregivers who provide unpaid, informal assistance to
18 persons age sixty and older with physical or cognitive
19 disabilities.

20 (b) The joint legislative committee shall consider
21 providing support in the following categories, among others:

22 (1) Coordinated services and policies;



- 1 (2) Training and education;
- 2 (3) Respite services;
- 3 (4) Financial incentives; and
- 4 (5) Balancing work and caregiving.

5 (c) The joint legislative committee shall seek input from
6 the department of health, department of human services,
7 department of taxation, the University of Hawaii, the executive
8 office on aging, and the elderly, disability, business, and
9 faith-based communities.

10 SECTION 4. The joint legislative committee shall submit
11 its findings and recommendations to the legislature no later
12 than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2007 regular
13 session.

14 The joint legislative committee shall cease to exist on
15 June 30, 2007.

16 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the following sums or so much
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007:

19 House of representatives	\$5,000
20 Senate	\$5,000

21



1 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the house of
2 representatives and the senate, respectively, for the purposes
3 of this Act.

4 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.

5

INTRODUCED BY: Enganne Chun Aakulana
Yes Khan
Guy L. Han
Rosaly de Bel



Report Title:

Family Caregiving

Description:

Establishes a joint legislative committee on family caregiving.

