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# 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 the high cost of institutional long-term  
2 care.

3 In Hawaii, the likelihood of becoming a caregiver does not  
4 vary substantially among different demographic and socioeconomic  
5 groups. Married persons in Hawaii are equally as likely to  
6 provide care to an older adult as their unmarried counterparts.  
7 Among the different ethnic groups in Hawaii, native Hawaiians  
8 are most likely to provide regular care to an older adult,  
9 followed by Filipinos, Japanese, and Caucasians. According to  
10 national studies, women are more likely than men to be primary  
11 caregivers. Women also provide higher intensities and  
12 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 elder care roles, working caregivers take leaves  
16 of absence, report to work late or leave early, change from  
17 full-time to part-time employment, switch to less demanding  
18 jobs, retire early, or give up work completely. Consequently,  
19 caregiving may reduce a caregiver's retirement income because of  
20 reduced work hours or fewer years in the workforce, resulting in  
21 reduced contributions to pensions, social security, and other  
22 retirement savings.



1           The legislature further finds that significant changes in  
2 the medicare and medicaid health insurance programs nationally  
3 and locally will impose greater responsibilities upon  
4 individuals and families to be well-informed and astute about  
5 long-term care planning, financing, and the options available to  
6 assist them. Consumers will need expert, one-to-one counseling  
7 in articulating their questions as they seek specific  
8 information or help. Technology may facilitate the  
9 dissemination of information, but agencies still must have the  
10 capacity to explain and clarify issues and direct people to  
11 available 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.  
17 These individuals are faced with reduced home- and community-  
18 based care options, thereby placing the responsibility on  
19 families who may be inadequately prepared and trained to provide  
20 such care.

21           The caregiving tradition in Hawaii will continue to be  
22 challenged by changes in demographics. Birth rates, marriages,



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

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

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



1           The purpose of this Act is to establish a joint legislative  
2 committee on family caregiving to address the looming care  
3 crisis.

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

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

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

16           The committee shall select a chairperson from its  
17 membership.

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



1 (c) The joint legislative committee shall consider  
2 providing support in categories including but not limited to:

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

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

13 (e) The joint legislative committee shall submit its  
14 findings and recommendations to the legislature no later than  
15 twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of  
16 2007.

17 (f) The joint legislative committee shall cease to exist  
18 on June 30, 2007.

19 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.



SB3253, SD1, HD1, CD1

**Report Title:**

Family Caregiving

**Description:**

Establishes a joint legislative committee on family caregiving.  
(CD1)

