
A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR LEGAL SERVICES.

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

1 SECTION 1. In its November 2007 report, *Achieving Access*
2 *to Justice for Hawaii's People*, the Access to Justice Hui
3 exposed the compelling and extensive need for legal services in
4 civil matters amongst Hawaii's low-income residents. Each day,
5 these residents grapple with disparate issues, sometimes
6 simultaneously, in civil matters related to affordable housing,
7 homelessness, domestic and sexual violence, child custody, elder
8 abuse, public benefits, consumer fraud, and immigration.
9 According to the report, over 77 per cent of Hawaii's low-income
10 community is without access to critical legal services.

11 The legislature finds that while the need for legal
12 services is great, the resources to meet those needs are
13 inadequate. Hawaii's low-income community relies heavily on
14 legal service providers who offer a wide range of legal
15 assistance on civil matters to residents statewide. In 2007
16 alone, legal service providers in Hawaii offered direct legal
17 services in 15,000 civil matters involving family law, public
18 entitlements, housing, immigration, domestic violence, civil



1 rights, health, consumer issues, estate planning, employment,
2 and education.

3 Legal service providers throughout the State have
4 demonstrated their commitment to the people of Hawaii. They
5 have also demonstrated their ability to generate funds from a
6 variety of private and federal resources to sustain and create
7 new and innovative services to meet the expanding legal needs of
8 the low-income community. The legislature further finds that
9 access to legal services is essential to a free and democratic
10 society. The State has a responsibility to help fund the
11 provision of legal services so that legal service providers can
12 continue to serve the legal needs of the low-income community.

13 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for legal
14 service providers so that they can:

- 15 (1) Continue to offer a wide range of essential legal
16 services on civil matters to low-income residents at
17 their current levels of operation; and
- 18 (2) Further develop their capacity to meet the expanding
19 need for legal services amongst this population.

20 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
22 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for



1 legal service providers to continue to offer a wide range of
2 essential legal services on civil matters to low-income
3 residents at their current levels of operation, and further
4 develop their capacity to meet the expanding need for legal
5 services amongst this population. The sum appropriated shall be
6 allocated as follows:

7	Legal Aid Society of Hawaii	\$
8	Na Loio	\$
9	Volunteer Legal Services of Hawaii	\$

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
11 accounting and general services for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.



Report Title:

Appropriation; Legal Services

Description:

Appropriates funds to certain legal service providers to help them continue to offer a wide range of essential legal services on civil matters to low-income residents at their current levels of operation, and further develop their capacity to meet the expanding need for legal services amongst this population.

(HB3369 HD1)

