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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO QUEST ENROLLMENT.

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

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

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



1           The legislature further finds that almost fifty four per  
2 cent of the funds needed to cover all eligible adults under the  
3 QUEST program can be matched by the federal government.

4           The purpose of this Act is to expand enrollment in the  
5 State's QUEST program by eliminating the enrollment cap.

6           SECTION 2. (a) The department of human services shall  
7 submit a request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid  
8 Services to amend the state waiver to allow the State to remove  
9 its QUEST enrollment cap. Upon securing the amendment to the  
10 state waiver, the department of human services shall remove any  
11 cap on enrollment in the State's QUEST program and shall enroll  
12 all otherwise eligible individuals who are at or under one  
13 hundred fifty per cent of the federal poverty level. No monthly  
14 premium or co-payment will be imposed on anyone who is at or  
15 below one hundred fifty per cent of the federal poverty level.  
16 The director of human services shall adopt rules in accordance  
17 with chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to implement this  
18 section.

19           (b) The department of human services shall implement these  
20 changes so that those who are newly eligible pursuant to this  
21 Act shall be qualified for benefits by July 1, 2009.



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008, and  
4 the same sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
5 year 2008-2009, to expand healthcare coverage by eliminating the  
6 cap on enrollment in the State's QUEST program.

7 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
8 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.



**Report Title:**

QUEST Eligibility; Eliminate Enrollment Cap

**Description:**

Eliminates cap on enrollment in the QUEST program and make eligible anyone at or below one hundred fifty per cent the federal poverty level. Directs the department of human services to apply for an amendment of the state waiver from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

