
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

*REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING A SMOKING CESSATION BENEFIT TO
HAWAII QUEST BENEFICIARIES.*

1 WHEREAS, smoking remains a major health issue for Hawaii's
2 diverse people and results in more than eleven hundred deaths in
3 the State each year; and
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5 WHEREAS, the Department of Health reports that in Hawaii,
6 over seventeen per cent of adults and more than fourteen per
7 cent of high school students smoke cigarettes; and
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9 WHEREAS, Hawaii's smoking-related health and medical costs
10 total \$262,000,000 annually, of which \$91,000,000 is estimated
11 to be Medicaid-related; and
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13 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
14 reports that smoking-attributable neonatal expenditures in
15 Hawaii total \$702,330 over one year and that these costs are
16 completely preventable; and
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18 WHEREAS, helping pregnant women quit smoking would have
19 enormous health benefits, including reducing tobacco-related
20 spontaneous abortions, rates of low-birthweight infants,
21 admissions to neonatal intensive care units, infant deaths from
22 perinatal disorders, and sudden infant death syndrome; and
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24 WHEREAS, although the smoking rate among pregnant women in
25 Hawaii is a relatively low 7.1 per cent, this high-risk behavior
26 still impacts the lives of 1,200 babies every year; and
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28 WHEREAS, Native Hawaiian women were more likely than other
29 ethnic groups to smoke in the three months before pregnancy and
30 during the third trimester, according to the statewide Pregnancy
31 Risk Assessment Monitoring System; and
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1 WHEREAS, many of the State's Medicaid beneficiaries are
2 members of ethnic groups with traditionally high smoking
3 prevalence rates, such as Native Hawaiians; and
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5 WHEREAS, the QUEST program, which provides health coverage
6 through health plans for eligible Hawaii residents, provides
7 medical coverage to pregnant women whose gross monthly household
8 income is no more than 185 per cent of the Federal Poverty
9 Level; and
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11 WHEREAS, as of 2005, thirty-eight states' Medicaid programs
12 offered program recipients at least one form of tobacco-
13 dependence treatment, such as counseling or medication, but few
14 states' Medicaid programs covered both medication and counseling
15 as recommended by the 2000 Public Health Service clinical
16 practice guidelines; and
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18 WHEREAS, in order to achieve the 2010 National Health
19 Objective, states, including Hawaii, should offer or increase
20 Medicaid coverage for treatment of tobacco dependence; and
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22 WHEREAS, the Legislature has considered a proposal to
23 expand the scope of the QUEST program to include all Medicaid
24 beneficiaries; and
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26 WHEREAS, regardless of whether legislation is passed during
27 the Regular Session of 2009, the Department of Human Services,
28 which administers QUEST, should consider ways to provide smoking
29 cessation counseling services to all Hawaii Medicaid
30 beneficiaries; now, therefore,
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32 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
33 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
34 of 2009, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Human
35 Services is requested to collect data and conduct a feasibility
36 study of developing and implementing a program to provide
37 counseling treatment to all QUEST beneficiaries wishing to quit
38 smoking; and
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
41 Services is requested to report its finding and recommendations
42 to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
43 convening of the Regular Session of 2010; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human
3 Services and the Chairs of the Senate and House Human Services
4 Committees.
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OFFERED BY:

John M. Pajno
Tom Brunner

JAN 27 2009

