
HOUSE 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

4
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

8
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

12
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

17
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

23
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

27
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

32
33 WHEREAS, many of the State's Medicaid beneficiaries are
34 members of ethnic groups with traditionally high smoking
35 prevalence rates, such as Native Hawaiians; and

36



1 WHEREAS, the QUEST program, which provides health coverage
2 through health plans for eligible Hawaii residents, provides
3 medical coverage to pregnant women whose gross monthly household
4 income is no more than 185 per cent of the Federal Poverty
5 Level; and
6

7 WHEREAS, as of 2005, thirty-eight states' Medicaid programs
8 offered program recipients at least one form of tobacco-
9 dependence treatment, such as counseling or medication, but few
10 states' Medicaid programs covered both medication and counseling
11 as recommended by the 2000 Public Health Service clinical
12 practice guidelines; and
13

14 WHEREAS, in order to achieve the 2010 National Health
15 Objective, states, including Hawaii, should offer or increase
16 Medicaid coverage for treatment of tobacco dependence; and
17

18 WHEREAS, the Legislature has considered a proposal to
19 expand the scope of the QUEST program to include all Medicaid
20 beneficiaries; and
21

22 WHEREAS, regardless of whether legislation is passed during
23 the Regular Session of 2009, the Department of Human Services,
24 which administers QUEST, should consider ways to provide smoking
25 cessation counseling services to all Hawaii Medicaid
26 beneficiaries; now, therefore,
27

28 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
29 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
30 of 2009, that the Department of Human Services is requested to
31 collect data and conduct a feasibility study of developing and
32 implementing a program to provide counseling treatment to all
33 QUEST beneficiaries wishing to quit smoking; and
34

35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
36 Services is requested to report its finding and recommendations
37 to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
38 convening of the Regular Session of 2010; and
39

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
41 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human
42 Services and the Chairs of the Senate and House Human Services
43 Committees.
44



H.R. NO. 36

1

OFFERED BY:

John M. Pappas
Tom Bunn

JAN 27 2009

