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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1           SECTION 1. Homelessness is a complex issue that requires a  
2 comprehensive and collaborative approach among public, private,  
3 nonprofit, and other community stakeholders to provide services  
4 and resources to homeless individuals and families, and to  
5 prevent homelessness. Act 279, Session Laws of Hawaii 1992,  
6 established the Hale Kokua project, a two-year homeless  
7 assistance pilot project within the Hawaii housing authority to  
8 provide incentives and assistance to private homeowners in the  
9 city and county of Honolulu who set aside existing dwelling  
10 units, constructed new dwelling units or improved existing  
11 dwelling units, for rental for a period of five years by  
12 families or individuals classified as homeless under the  
13 project.

14           Subsequently, Act 167, Session Laws of Hawaii 1998,  
15 established the Hale Kokua program within the housing and  
16 community development corporation of Hawaii to address the issue  
17 of homelessness by providing housing and job-training for the  
18 State's homeless population. This homeless assistance program



1 authorized the payment of a state grant and monthly rent  
2 supplement to interested property owners who set aside existing  
3 rental space or made improvements or constructed adjoining or  
4 separate dwelling units to rent the units to families or  
5 individuals classified as employed but homeless under the  
6 program. The Hale Kokua program was subsequently placed under  
7 the Hawaii public housing authority by Act 180, Session Laws of  
8 Hawaii 2006; however, the program was later repealed by Act 89,  
9 Session Laws of Hawaii 2010.

10 The legislature finds that homelessness continues to be one  
11 of the primary challenges in the State. According to the  
12 Homelessness Research Institute, Hawaii has the highest rate of  
13 homeless per capita of any state with about forty-five homeless  
14 individuals out of every ten thousand.

15 The purpose of this Act is to assist homeless families and  
16 individuals in the State by establishing the Hale Kokua program  
17 as an additional housing resource under the department of human  
18 services.

19 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
20 amended by adding a new section to part XVII to be appropriately  
21 designated and to read as follows:



1        "§346- Hale Kokua program; established. (a) There is  
 2 established a homeless assistance program known as the Hale  
 3 Kokua program, to provide incentives and assistance to  
 4 homeowners throughout the State who set aside existing dwelling  
 5 units for rental by families or individuals classified as  
 6 employed but homeless or who have steady income from a  
 7 government source; provided that the family or individual shall  
 8 be:

- 9        (1) Unrelated to the homeowner who sets aside any dwelling  
 10 unit for rental under this section; and
- 11        (2) Registered in the State of Hawaii homeless management  
 12 information system.

13        (b) The department shall hire an administrator to  
 14 administer and oversee the Hale Kokua program. The department  
 15 may utilize existing contracts with private sector agencies to  
 16 carry out the duties and responsibilities of the program with  
 17 additional resources.

18        (c) The duties of the department or contracted agency  
 19 shall include:

- 20        (1) Carrying out the requirements of the Hale Kokua  
 21 program utilizing the rapid re-housing model;



1       (2) Monitoring the progress of the program and collecting  
2       annual statistics showing the numbers of homeless  
3       persons, homeless families, and homeless children,  
4       using appropriate measurement systems; and

5       (3) Preparing recommendations to improve and expand the  
6       program including but not limited to incentives for  
7       participating property owners to sign up for  
8       additional terms.

9       (d) The department shall limit participation to not more  
10      than ten property owners within each census tract at any given  
11      period in time, without regard to the existence or operation of  
12      shelters and other facilities to aid the homeless in the tract.

13      The department or contracted agency shall notify prospective  
14      participants registered on the waiting list in each census tract  
15      of the opportunity to participate in the program as these  
16      opportunities may arise in each tract.

17      (e) All rental subsidies and payments allocated by the  
18      program under this section shall be subject to the availability  
19      of funds.

20      (f) As used in this section, unless the context clearly  
21      requires otherwise:



1       "Administrator" means the state homeless section  
2 administrator.

3       "Employed but homeless" means any person who is homeless as  
4 defined in section 346-361 and:

- 5       (1) Is employed at least nineteen hours per week; or
- 6       (2) Participates in an employment training program and  
7 does volunteer work for a total of nineteen hours per  
8 week until employment can be found."

9       SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so  
11 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 for  
12 the homeless programs office of the department of human services  
13 to:

- 14       (1) Establish one full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE)  
15           permanent state homeless section administrator in the  
16           department of human services to head and oversee the  
17           Hale Kokua program;
- 18       (2) Implement the Hale Kokua program; and
- 19       (3) Carry out the purposes of this Act.

20       The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
21 human services for the purposes of this Act.

22       SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



**Report Title:**

Homeless; Hale Kokua Program; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Hale Kokua Program within the Department of Human Services to incentivize homeowners statewide to set aside dwelling units for rental by families or individuals classified as employed but homeless or who have steady income from a government source. Appropriates funds for the Hale Kokua Program. Effective July 1, 2025. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

