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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGING.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that falls and fall-  
2 related injuries among the elderly impact individuals, families,  
3 the community, and the State's health care system. Fall  
4 prevention is a major concern for the safety and well-being of  
5 the State's elderly residents, the fastest-growing segment of  
6 Hawaii's population.

7           Among the elderly in Hawaii, falls are the leading cause of  
8 fatal injuries (an average of forty-four per cent) and injury-  
9 related hospitalizations (an average of eighty-three per cent).  
10 On average, every five hours in Hawaii an elderly person is  
11 injured so severely in a fall that hospitalization is necessary.  
12 Falls among Hawaii's elderly also result in a yearly average of  
13 eighty-two deaths and nearly one thousand eight hundred  
14 hospitalizations.

15           The legislature further finds that hospital costs  
16 associated with fall-related injuries average over \$65,000,000 a  
17 year. This total does not include the additional significant



1 costs associated with skilled nursing care and rehabilitation.  
2 Among Hawaii seniors hospitalized for a fall, forty-three per  
3 cent are discharged to skilled nursing facilities for additional  
4 care, and twelve per cent are moved to rehabilitation  
5 facilities.

6 The legislature additionally finds that access to fall  
7 prevention services and programs would significantly reduce  
8 these costs. In addition, the early detection of fall  
9 occurrences would reduce both costs and suffering by expediting  
10 treatment, minimizing serious long-term consequences, reducing  
11 the extent of the injury, and in some instances, avoiding death.

12 Falls among the elderly are a significant public health  
13 issue. Yet, currently, there are insufficient resources to  
14 develop a coordinated statewide approach to reduce and promptly  
15 detect falls among the elderly. The legislature therefore finds  
16 that the department of health's emergency medical services and  
17 injury prevention system branch should be permitted to establish  
18 and maintain a program dedicated to fall prevention and early  
19 detection for the elderly. This program shall serve as a focal  
20 point for statewide injury prevention and detection efforts to  
21 ensure multidisciplinary support, coordination of prevention and



1 detection efforts, and continuity of implementation and  
2 accountability.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish a fall prevention  
4 and early detection coordinator within the emergency medical  
5 services and injury prevention system branch of the department  
6 of health to coordinate the provision of public and private fall  
7 prevention and early detection services for the elderly.

8 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
9 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
10 and to read as follows:

11 "§321- Fall prevention and early detection coordinator.  
12 There is established within the emergency medical services and  
13 injury prevention system branch a fall prevention and early  
14 detection coordinator to coordinate the provision of public and  
15 private fall prevention and early detection services for the  
16 elderly."

17 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the trauma system  
18 special fund the sum of \$81,985 or so much thereof as may be  
19 necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 to establish and fill one  
20 full-time equivalent fall prevention and early detection  
21 coordinator position.



1           The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
2 health for the purposes of this Act.

3           SECTION 4.   New statutory material is underscored.

4           SECTION 5.   This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.



**Report Title:**

Kupuna Caucus; Fall Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a Fall Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator position within the Department of Health's Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch. Appropriates funds. (HB2053 CD1)

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

