
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INFANT MORTALITY PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that, absent a health
2 problem of the baby or mother during pregnancy, babies delivered
3 at thirty-nine or forty weeks of gestation generally are
4 healthier than babies born prior to the thirty-ninth week of
5 pregnancy. In addition, medical costs associated with full-term
6 babies are lower than medical costs of babies delivered before
7 the thirty-ninth week of pregnancy. However, the American
8 Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has reported that
9 evidence suggests a sharp rise in the number of non-medically
10 indicated elective inductions performed prior to thirty-nine
11 weeks of pregnancy in the United States in the past twenty
12 years. Research shows that there are certain serious health
13 risks associated with such early deliveries, including negative
14 effects on a baby's lung and brain development, vision, and
15 weight.

16 The legislature also finds that the policy of most birthing
17 facilities in the State conforms to the guidelines of the
18 American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists that



1 elective labor induction should not occur before the thirty-
2 ninth week of gestation. However, while anecdotal, serious
3 concerns have been expressed that there are too many elective
4 pre-term deliveries in the State. The Legislature recognizes
5 that hard data and statistics to determine how widespread this
6 problem is are a necessary first step in addressing this issue.

7 The legislature further finds that national statistics may
8 indicate that a point-of-care newborn screening program should
9 be established in the State. However, once again, relevant
10 statistics and hard data for Hawaii are insufficient to justify
11 the program. More evidence is necessary to determine whether
12 such a program is needed in Hawaii.

13 The purpose of this Act is to convene a task force to
14 collect solid data to determine whether there are too many
15 elective pre-term deliveries in Hawaii and, if so, to develop
16 approaches and measures for addressing the issue. The task
17 force shall also collect data to determine whether a point-of-
18 care newborn screening program is needed in Hawaii.

19 SECTION 2. The department of health shall convene a task
20 force that includes representation from the department of
21 health, birthing facilities in Hawaii, the Hawaii section of the



1 American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the
2 Healthcare Association of Hawaii.

3 The task force shall collect relevant data concerning the
4 number of elective pre-term pregnancy deliveries in Hawaii. The
5 task force shall determine whether that number is so large that
6 it poses a public health threat. If it so finds, the task force
7 shall develop approaches and measures for addressing the issue.
8 The task force shall also collect the data needed to determine
9 whether Hawaii needs a point-of-care newborn screening program.

10 The task force shall submit a report of its findings and
11 recommendations to the legislature, including any proposed
12 legislation, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
13 the regular session of 2014.

14 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2013-2014 to
17 reimburse members of the task force convened in section 2 for
18 expenses, including travel expenses, necessary for the
19 performance of their duties.

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

22 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2013.



Report Title:

Infant Mortality; Elective Pre-Term Deliveries; Point-of-Care Newborn Screening; Task Force; Appropriation

Description:

Creates a task force that is to be convened by the department of health to study and make recommendations on elective pre-term pregnancy deliveries and point-of-care newborn screening. Appropriates funds to reimburse members of the task force for travel and other expenses. (SD2)

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