
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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
17 each year. This total does not include the additional
18 significant costs associated with skilled nursing care and



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

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

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



1 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
2 health's emergency medical services and injury prevention system
3 branch to establish and maintain a statewide fall prevention and
4 early detection program and to make an appropriation for this
5 program.

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

9 "§321- Fall prevention and early detection program. (a)

10 The department of health shall establish and maintain, within
11 the emergency medical services and injury prevention system
12 branch, a fall prevention and early detection program to serve
13 as a focal point for statewide injury prevention and detection
14 efforts. The department may dedicate a position to fall
15 prevention and early detection in support of this program.

16 (b) The statewide fall prevention and early detection
17 program shall develop a statewide approach to falls among the
18 elderly by:

- 19 (1) Investigating and examining the immediate and long-
20 term dangers of fall injuries on the elderly;
21 (2) Examining the fiscal impact of falls by the elderly on
22 the State's medical system and health care costs;



- 1 (3) Recommending appropriate interventions and prevention
2 programs to reduce falls by the elderly;
- 3 (4) Investigating and implementing the most effective
4 means to enhance public awareness that falls are
5 preventable;
- 6 (5) Reviewing and developing the potential for increasing
7 for the elderly and their caregivers, on a statewide
8 basis, the availability and accessibility of fall
9 prevention programs that effectively use community
10 resources;
- 11 (6) Recommending measures that will promote early
12 detection of falls, particularly for those who live
13 alone or in circumstances where the likelihood of not
14 being discovered soon after a fall is great; and
- 15 (7) Investigating and recommending the best way to expand
16 the role of medical and health care professionals in
17 screening, educating, and referring the elderly to
18 fall prevention and early detection services and
19 programs.

20 For purposes of this subsection, the statewide fall
21 prevention and early detection program shall collaborate with
22 interested stakeholders, including health care facilities,



1 community coalitions, government agencies, and organizations
2 concerned with protecting the elderly and preventing and
3 detecting elderly falls.

4 (c) The department shall submit a report to the
5 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
6 each regular session, beginning with the regular session of
7 2015, on the statewide fall prevention and early detection
8 program, describing the progress made in implementing subsection
9 (b), including the review of fall prevention data and the impact
10 of falls by the elderly on the State's medical system and health
11 care costs.

12 (d) For the purposes of this section, "the elderly" means
13 persons who are age sixty-five or older."

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 and
17 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
18 year 2014-2015 for the department of health's emergency medical
19 services and injury prevention system branch to establish and
20 maintain a statewide fall prevention and early detection
21 program.

1 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
2 of 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, 2050.



Report Title:

Kupuna Caucus; DOH; Statewide Fall Prevention and Early Detection Program; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a fall prevention and early detection program within DOH's emergency medical services and injury prevention system branch. Appropriates unspecified sums for FY 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Effective 7/1/50. (SD2)

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