
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, which is the fastest-growing
6 segment of 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 an elderly person in Hawaii 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 more than
17 \$65,000,000 per year. This total does not include the
18 additional significant costs associated with skilled nursing



1 care and rehabilitation. Among Hawaii seniors hospitalized for
2 a fall, 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 permitted to establish
17 and maintain a program dedicated to fall prevention and early
18 detection for the elderly. This program will 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 establish a fall prevention
2 and early detection coordinator within the emergency medical
3 services and injury prevention system branch of the department
4 of health to coordinate the provision of public and private fall
5 prevention and early detection services.

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

9 "§321- Fall prevention and early detection coordinator.

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

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

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



- 1 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.
- 2 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

Kupuna Caucus; Fall Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator;
Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a fall prevention and early detection coordinator
within the DOH Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention
System Branch. Makes an appropriation. Effective 07/01/2050.
(SD2)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

