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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

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

1           SECTION 1. Research shows that aging adults who volunteer  
2 in the community experience an increased sense of purpose and  
3 well-being as well as improved physical, mental, and emotional  
4 health. Civic engagement prolongs seniors' independence by  
5 allowing them to remain active and healthy. The adult  
6 protective and community services branch of the department of  
7 human services provides opportunities for seniors to engage with  
8 their community and make a difference.

9           One opportunity for kupuna in Hawaii to volunteer their  
10 services is with the foster grandparent program. This program  
11 utilizes low-income senior volunteers to serve as role models,  
12 mentors, and tutors for children with special or exceptional  
13 needs through local organizations such as head start centers,  
14 schools, and other youth facilities. The seniors must be fifty-  
15 five years of age or older, on a limited income, and able to  
16 work a minimum of fifteen hours per week. In return, foster



1 grandparent volunteers receive a non-taxable stipend of \$2.65  
2 per hour, a meal and transportation allowance, and training.

3 A second opportunity for seniors to actively participate in  
4 their community is with the senior companion program. The  
5 senior companion program is for limited-income adults over the  
6 age of fifty-five. The volunteers provide companionship and  
7 support to home-bound seniors, allowing those individuals to  
8 continue living independently in their homes for as long as  
9 possible. Another vital part of the program provides much  
10 needed respite and relief to caregivers. This program requires  
11 volunteers to serve fifteen hours per week and provides them  
12 with a non-taxable stipend of \$2.65 per hour along with meal and  
13 transportation allowances. The program helps control rising  
14 health care costs and gives families and professional caregivers  
15 much needed time off.

16 The foster grandparent program and senior companion  
17 programs are federally funded by the Federal Corporation for  
18 National and Community Service, with twenty per cent matching  
19 funds being provided by the State. Although both programs are  
20 required to provide services statewide, Maui county has been  
21 underserved. Currently, Maui county represents less than one



1 per cent of the total program volunteer base for both programs.  
2 The foster grandparent program has four active volunteers on  
3 Maui despite having one hundred seventeen volunteers for all  
4 other counties combined. Similarly, the senior companion  
5 program has six active volunteers on Maui despite having eighty-  
6 five volunteers across the other counties. In 2014, a federal  
7 compliance monitoring of the senior companion program in Hawaii  
8 identified the lack of adequate staffing as an area of concern  
9 by the federal grant administrator, and cited the lower number  
10 of volunteers and adequate program support in Maui county.

11 Maui county has demonstrated a need for the services that  
12 these two programs provide. Volunteers through the foster  
13 grandparent program are needed to support the state funded pre-  
14 kindergarten classrooms, especially in rural Maui county,  
15 including the islands of Molokai and Lanai. Additionally, the  
16 aging population in Maui county is growing rapidly and relies  
17 heavily on family caregivers who have an increasing need for  
18 resources and support services that could be provided by a  
19 senior companion volunteer.

20 Creating a program specialist position on the island of  
21 Kauai resulted in a significant increase in the number of active



1 senior volunteers on Kauai. The same is needed in Maui county  
2 to fulfill the federal grant requirements of serving communities  
3 in every county as well as meeting the needs of the population  
4 of Maui county. The program specialist will provide program  
5 support for the foster grandparent program and senior companion  
6 programs, including developing senior volunteers and recruiting  
7 and supporting volunteer stations to coordinate assignments in  
8 school settings and for home-bound seniors.

9 The purpose of this Act is to establish a full-time program  
10 specialist position for Maui county within the adult protective  
11 and community services branch of the department of human  
12 services to oversee the foster grandparent program and senior  
13 companion programs for the islands of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai.

14 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
16 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for the  
17 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) permanent  
18 program specialist position for Maui county within the adult  
19 protective and community services branch of the department of  
20 human services to oversee the foster grandparent program and  
21 senior companion programs in Maui county.



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

3           SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2060.



**Report Title:**

Foster Grandparent Program; Senior Companion Program;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to the department of human services to create one full-time program specialist position for Maui County within the adult protective and community services branch to oversee the foster grandparent program and senior companion programs on Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. (HB1877 HD1)

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