

JAN 20 2016

A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE BASIC ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS
TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that in response to the
2 State's receipt of a failing grade of "F" in a series of recent
3 oral health report cards released by The Pew Center on the
4 States, a more concerted effort needs to be made to address oral
5 health in Hawaii, especially in underserved communities.

6 According to the department of health in its "Hawaii Oral
7 Health: Key Findings" report of September 25, 2015:

- 8 (1) Eighty-two per cent of high-income adults in Hawaii
9 see a dentist each year, as compared to only fifty-two
10 per cent of low-income adults;
- 11 (2) Fifty-one per cent of low-income adults lost teeth due
12 to dental disease as compared to only thirty-two per
13 cent of high-income adults;
- 14 (3) Only forty-one per cent of pregnant women in Hawaii
15 reported seeing a dentist during their pregnancy from
16 2009 to 2011, with low-income women and women on



- 1 Medicaid/Med-QUEST among the lowest estimated groups
2 of receiving care;
- 3 (4) In 2012, there were more than three thousand emergency
4 room visits due to preventable dental problems,
5 representing a sixty-seven per cent increase from
6 2006, significantly higher than the national average;
- 7 (5) That these visits accounted for \$8,500,000 in total
8 expenditures by the State, more than double the
9 \$4,000,000 spent in 2006; and
- 10 (6) Only eleven per cent of Hawaii's residents receive
11 fluoridated drinking water, as compared to seventy-
12 five per cent for the United States as a whole.

13 The legislature further finds that these figures show that
14 oral health in the State is a pervasive and expensive public
15 health crisis that needs to be addressed, especially in low-
16 income and underserved populations.

17 SECTION 2. The legislature finds that in response to these
18 glaring disparities and inadequacies, the department of health
19 posted eight key strategies for rebuilding the State's dental
20 public health infrastructure, including:



- 1 (1) Continuing to support and expand affordable and
2 accessible preventive dental care services to Hawaii's
3 low-income populations;
- 4 (2) Expanding Medicaid dental services for adults beyond
5 the current coverage for "emergencies only" to include
6 preventive and treatment services;
- 7 (3) Considering increasing reimbursements to dental
8 providers for key preventive or restorative procedures
9 to increase participation in Medicaid; and
- 10 (4) Developing strategies to reduce barriers to finding
11 and receiving preventive dental care services for
12 children enrolled in the Medicaid program.

13 The legislature further finds that it is in the best
14 interest of the State to expand access to coverage by restoring
15 basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees.

16 SECTION 3. The legislature finds that the State's
17 federally matched Medicaid and Med-QUEST programs form an
18 essential source of support for underserved individuals by
19 offering insurance options for low-income citizens, in addition
20 to other social service programs.



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1 The legislature further finds that restoring basic adult
 2 dental benefits would allow for individuals to eat properly,
 3 work productively, improve mental health well-being, and
 4 increase attendance and participation in school.

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
 6 funds to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid
 7 enrollees.

8 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
 9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$4,800,000 or so much
 10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 to restore
 11 basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees and employ the
 12 strategies listed in section 2 of this Act. The department of
 13 human services shall obtain the maximum federal matching funds
 14 available for this expenditure.

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

17 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

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S.B. NO. 2058

Report Title:

Medicaid; Adult Dental Benefits; Appropriation

Description:

Makes an appropriation to the department of human services to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees. Requires the department of human services to obtain the maximum federal matching funds available for this expenditure.

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