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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE OFFICE OF THE LONG-TERM CARE  
OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that in the executive  
2 office on aging reorganization of June 2015, the long-term care  
3 ombudsman program was reduced in staff to only the director,  
4 making Hawaii the only state in the country with a long-term  
5 care ombudsman program staff of one. In 1995, a time when most  
6 residents lived in nursing homes, the Institute of Medicine  
7 recommended a minimum staffing ratio of one full-time paid  
8 ombudsman for every two thousand long-term care residents.  
9 Currently, Hawaii has over twelve thousand long-term care  
10 residents, most of whom live in the community rather than in  
11 nursing homes, which creates greater challenges. Under the 1995  
12 Institute of Medicine recommendation, Hawaii should have a  
13 minimum of six full-time long-term care ombudsmen.

14           The legislature further finds that the long-term care  
15 ombudsman program may utilize volunteers. The long-term care  
16 ombudsman program has certified close to one hundred eighty



1 volunteers since the volunteer component began in 2001, using  
2 considerable time and resources for recruitment, training, and  
3 retention; however, as of 2016, there were only eight ombudsman  
4 volunteers. Furthermore, volunteers cannot substitute for a  
5 full-time, highly trained, paid staff position.

6 The legislature also finds that in addition to visits to  
7 long-term care facilities, long-term care ombudsmen respond to a  
8 multitude of complaints, engage in investigations, and provide  
9 information, assistance, and referrals to long-term care  
10 residents and their families. As of 2016, there were 1,405  
11 long-term care facilities on Oahu, forty facilities on Kauai,  
12 seventy facilities on Maui, and one hundred eighty-seven  
13 facilities on Hawaii, for a total of 1,702 facilities statewide.  
14 The long-term care ombudsman program lacks staff to visit each  
15 facility on a quarterly basis, let alone facilitate resident and  
16 family councils, provide more community education, and work more  
17 closely with neighbor island county councils and the area  
18 agencies on aging. The legislature additionally finds that the  
19 long-term care ombudsman program requires resources to ensure  
20 that the neighbor islands' kupuna and their families receive the



1 same equal access to the services provided by the long-term care  
2 ombudsman program as Oahu has received since 1975.

3 The purpose of this Act is to support the long-term care  
4 ombudsman program on the island of Oahu and allocate funds for  
5 contracted services through the office of the long-term care  
6 ombudsman in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui.

7 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the  
10 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
11 2018-2019 for the long-term care ombudsman program to support  
12 the long-term care ombudsman program on the island of Oahu and  
13 provide funding for contracted services through the office of  
14 the long-term care ombudsman in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai,  
15 and Maui; provided that the appropriation shall be distributed  
16 as follows:

- 17 (1) Office of the long-term care ombudsman
- 18 for the city and county of Honolulu \$ ;
- 19 (2) Office of the long-term care ombudsman
- 20 for the county of Hawaii \$ ;



1 (3) Office of the long-term care ombudsman  
2 for the county of Kauai \$ ; and

3 (4) Office of the long-term care ombudsman  
4 for the county of Maui \$ .

5 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the executive  
6 office on aging for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2075.



**Report Title:**

Long-term Care Ombudsman; Long-term Care Ombudsman Program;  
Appropriation; Kupuna Caucus

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to support the program on Oahu and for contracted services in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui. (HB610 HD1)

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