

---

---

# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO CONDUCT A FULL STUDY  
ON THE REIMPLEMENTATION OF ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS FOR HAWAII  
RESIDENTS WHO ARE MEDICAID ENROLLEES AND TO SUBMIT A REPORT  
TO THE LEGISLATURE.

1           WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that oral disease is a  
2 significant health problem among many Hawaii residents,  
3 affecting their overall health and well-being; and  
4

5           WHEREAS, access to regular oral health care varies greatly  
6 across the State, with rural and neighbor island residents and  
7 low-income families experiencing greater access issues; and  
8

9           WHEREAS, lack of access to dental coverage and oral health  
10 care is a social justice issue that disproportionately affects  
11 the poor, children, the elderly, and racial and ethnic minority  
12 groups; and  
13

14           WHEREAS, poor oral health can negatively impact an  
15 individual's health and self-image; and  
16

17           WHEREAS, poor oral health has been linked to an array of  
18 acute and chronic health conditions, including heart disease,  
19 diabetes, stroke, depression, low birth weight, and premature  
20 birth; and  
21

22           WHEREAS, untreated dental disease can result in a loss of  
23 productivity in the work place due to absenteeism, under-  
24 employment, and unemployment; and  
25

26           WHEREAS, having dental benefits is a key factor in an  
27 individual's ability to access dental care; and



1 WHEREAS, the prevalence of dental disease and tooth loss is  
2 disproportionately high among low-income populations which  
3 include many individuals enrolled in Medicaid; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, insufficient coverage or access to dental care  
6 often further disadvantages Medicaid recipients, potentially  
7 leading to worse health outcomes and higher costs; and  
8

9 WHEREAS, nationally, studies have shown that reducing or  
10 eliminating Medicaid adult dental benefits has led to  
11 significant increases in dental-related emergency room visits  
12 and associated costs; and  
13

14 WHEREAS, it has been nearly a decade since the State  
15 removed all but emergency Medicaid adult dental benefits, and  
16 the Legislature finds that it is in the best interest of its  
17 residents to consider restoring dental benefits, including  
18 diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits, and to  
19 expand access to care for adult Medicaid enrollees; now,  
20 therefore,  
21

22 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
23 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of  
24 2019, the Senate concurring, that this body urges the Department  
25 of Human Services to conduct a full study on the  
26 reimplementaion of adult dental benefits for Hawaii residents  
27 who are Medicaid enrollees; and  
28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include:  
30

31 (1) A range of adult Medicaid dental benefit options  
32 including coverage of basic, comprehensive, population  
33 specific benefits and coverage offered by other states  
34 for diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental  
35 services; and  
36

37 (2) The estimated cost to the Hawaii Medicaid program for  
38 each option, including costs that qualify for federal  
39 matching funds; and  
40

41 (3) A projection, to the best of the Department of Human  
42 Services' ability, of the long-term financial benefit  
43 of reimplementing adult dental benefits; and  
44



1 (4) Feedback from the community and stakeholders; and

2

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human  
4 Services is requested to submit a report of its findings and  
5 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
6 Legislature no later than 20 days before the convening of the  
7 Regular Session of 2020; and

8

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
10 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director  
11 of Human Services, and Director of Health.

12

13

14

15

