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## HOUSE 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  
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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  
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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  
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14 WHEREAS, poor oral health can negatively impact an  
15 individual's health and self-image; and  
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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  
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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  
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26 WHEREAS, having dental benefits is a key factor in an  
27 individual's ability to access dental care; and  
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29 WHEREAS, the prevalence of dental disease and tooth loss is  
30 disproportionately high among low-income populations which  
31 include many individuals enrolled in Medicaid; and



1 WHEREAS, insufficient coverage or access to dental care  
2 often further disadvantages Medicaid recipients, potentially  
3 leading to worse health outcomes and higher costs; and  
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5 WHEREAS, nationally, studies have shown that reducing or  
6 eliminating Medicaid adult dental benefits has led to  
7 significant increases in dental-related emergency room visits  
8 and associated costs; and  
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10 WHEREAS, it has been nearly a decade since the State  
11 removed all but emergency Medicaid adult dental benefits, and  
12 the Legislature finds that it is in the best interest of its  
13 residents to consider restoring dental benefits, including  
14 diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits, and to  
15 expand access to care for adult Medicaid enrollees; now,  
16 therefore,  
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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
19 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of  
20 2019, that this body urges the Department of Human Services to  
21 conduct a full study on the reimplementation of adult dental  
22 benefits for Hawaii residents who are Medicaid enrollees; and  
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include:  
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26 (1) The full cost to restore preventative and restorative  
27 adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees, including  
28 federal matching funds; and  
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30 (2) A projection, to the best of the Department of Human  
31 Services' ability, of the long-term cost savings of  
32 reimplementing adult dental benefits; and  
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human  
35 Services is requested to submit a report of its findings and  
36 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
37 Legislature no later than 20 days before the convening of the  
38 Regular Session of 2020; and

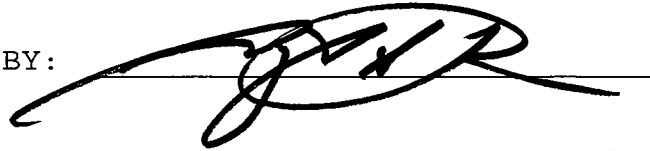


# H.R. NO. 134

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of Human  
3 Services, and Director of Health.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. W. R.", written over a horizontal line.

MAR 0 8 2019

