
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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

1 WHEREAS, access to regular dental care varies greatly
2 across the State, with many rural and neighbor island residents
3 and low-income families experiencing less access to regular
4 dental care than other residents; and

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6 WHEREAS, the lack of access to dental insurance coverage
7 and dental care is a social justice issue that
8 disproportionately affects the poor, children, the elderly, and
9 racial and ethnic minority groups; and

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11 WHEREAS, poor oral health can negatively impact an
12 individual's general health and self-image and has been linked
13 to an array of acute and chronic health conditions, including
14 heart disease, diabetes, strokes, depression, low birth weight,
15 premature births, and oral diseases; and

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17 WHEREAS, oral diseases are a significant health problem
18 that affects the overall health and well-being of many Hawaii
19 residents; and

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21 WHEREAS, untreated oral diseases can result in a decrease
22 in or loss of workplace productivity due to absenteeism, under-
23 employment, and unemployment; and

24
25 WHEREAS, the prevalence of oral diseases and tooth loss is
26 disproportionately high among low-income residents, especially
27 among Medicaid enrollees; and

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29 WHEREAS, receiving dental insurance coverage is a key
30 factor in an individual's ability to access dental care; and



1 WHEREAS, insufficient dental insurance coverage or access
2 to dental care may result in more severe health conditions and
3 higher costs, further disadvantaging Medicaid enrollees; and
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5 WHEREAS, studies have shown that reducing or eliminating
6 Medicaid adult dental benefits has led to significant national
7 increases in dental-related emergency room visits and associated
8 costs; and
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10 WHEREAS, it has been nearly a decade since the State
11 removed all non-emergency Medicaid adult dental benefits; and
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13 WHEREAS, it is in the public interest for the State to
14 consider restoring dental benefits, including diagnostic,
15 preventive, and restorative dental benefits, and to expand
16 access to care for adult Medicaid enrollees; now, 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 2020, the Senate concurring, the Department of Human Services is
21 urged to conduct a study on the reimplementation of adult dental
22 benefits for Hawaii residents who are Medicaid enrollees; and
23

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study shall include:
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- 26 (1) A range of adult Medicaid dental benefit options,
27 including coverage of basic, comprehensive, and
28 population specific benefits and coverage offered by
29 other states for diagnostic, preventive, and
30 restorative dental services;
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- 32 (2) The estimated cost to the State's Medicaid program for
33 each option, including any costs that qualify for
34 federal matching funds;
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- 36 (3) A projection, to the best of the Department of Human
37 Services' ability, of the long-term financial benefit
38 of reimplementing adult dental benefits for Medicaid
39 enrollees; and
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- 41 (4) Feedback from the community and stakeholders; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of Human Services is
 2 requested to submit a report of its findings and
 3 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
 4 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
 5 the Regular Session of 2021; and

6
 7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 8 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
 9 of Human Services, and Director of Health.

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OFFERED BY:

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