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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Act 90, Session Laws  
2 of Hawaii 2019, established the involuntary hospitalization task  
3 force to improve the admission process and care access for  
4 certain individuals who are involuntarily hospitalized. Act  
5 263, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, established a working group to  
6 evaluate current behavioral health care and related systems and  
7 identify existing resources, systems gaps, and possible action  
8 steps to improve the overall system of care. The findings from  
9 these initiatives highlight the need in Hawaii for a coordinated  
10 network of stabilization beds to allow health care workers to  
11 provide triage, clinical assessment, and recommendations for the  
12 next level of care for individuals struggling with substance  
13 use, mental health conditions, and homelessness.

14           The National Coalition for the Homeless has found that  
15 sixty-four per cent of homeless individuals are dependent on  
16 alcohol or other substances. In Hawaii, the Oahu homeless point  
17 in time count reported that 36.4 per cent of homeless single



1 adults suffer from some type of mental illness. The  
2 intersection of homelessness and behavioral health conditions is  
3 a crisis in the State and contributes to Hawaii having the  
4 second highest rate of homelessness in the nation.

5 Unfortunately, there is currently no coordinated system of  
6 stabilization for homeless individuals that assesses for and  
7 links to the next level of clinical care.

8 The legislature additionally finds that the current  
9 resources for those needing stabilization based on substance  
10 use, mental health, and homelessness are stretched, and  
11 emergency facilities throughout the State have experienced  
12 substantial increases in psychiatric emergency admissions. This  
13 has resulted in overcrowding and unsafe conditions for patients  
14 and medical staff.

15 The legislature also finds that comprehensive crisis  
16 response and stabilization services are crucial elements of the  
17 continuum of care. Reducing unnecessary admissions to emergency  
18 departments by appropriately placing clients in more suitable  
19 levels of care will improve outcomes, reduce inpatient hospital  
20 stays, and facilitate access to other behavioral health  
21 services.



1           The Hawaii coordinated access resource entry system  
 2 provides access to services for substance use and behavioral  
 3 health. The purpose of the system is to provide a coordinated  
 4 system of care rather than an assortment of independent  
 5 services. During its first three months of operation, the  
 6 Hawaii coordinated access resource entry system identified the  
 7 lack of stabilization beds as a significant gap in existing  
 8 resources.

9           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require and  
 10 appropriate funds for the department of health to repurpose  
 11 unused state facilities to provide short-term residential beds  
 12 to allow the stabilization, triage, and assessment of patients  
 13 in need of services for mental health conditions and/or  
 14 substance use, which may include homelessness.

15           SECTION 2. The department of health shall repurpose unused  
 16 state facilities to provide short-term residential beds to allow  
 17 the stabilization, triage, and assessment of patients in need of  
 18 services for mental health conditions and/or substance use,  
 19 which may include homelessness.

20           SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
 21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so



1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for  
2 the purposes of this Act.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
4 health for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

DOH; Stabilization Beds; Substance Use; Mental Health  
Conditions; Homelessness; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Health to repurpose unused state facilities to provide short-term residential beds to allow the stabilization, triage, and assessment of patients in need of services for mental health conditions and/or substance use, which may include homelessness. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

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