

---

---

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO LEGAL SERVICES FOR LOW-INCOME IMMIGRANTS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a large number of  
2 immigrants are constantly seeking to continue or obtain legal  
3 status and citizenship in the United States. However, the  
4 immigration court process is highly complex, which may be  
5 intimidating or overwhelming for immigrants who may struggle  
6 with navigating a different culture and language. Many  
7 immigrants face barriers to obtaining legal status and  
8 citizenship. Low-income immigrants often lack the resources to  
9 obtain legal representation, which may have a profound impact on  
10 the immigrants' ability to receive a fair hearing.

11           The legislature further finds that Hawaii has always  
12 welcomed people of all backgrounds, nationalities, and  
13 ethnicities. According to the 2017 American Immigration Council  
14 Fact Sheet, nearly eighteen per cent of Hawaii residents are  
15 immigrants, while more than one in seven residents is a  
16 native-born United States citizen with at least one immigrant  
17 parent. Immigrants are an integral part of Hawaii's diverse,



1 multicultural community and make extensive contributions to the  
2 State.

3         Given the current political climate, a significant number  
4 of low-income immigrants are at risk of being detained or  
5 deported. Therefore, there are vital public policy reasons  
6 behind providing legal counsel to immigrants in immigration  
7 proceedings.

8         Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate  
9 funds to the department of labor and industrial relations,  
10 office of community services to contract with non-profit  
11 providers to provide low-income immigrants with legal counsel to  
12 assist and represent them in immigration proceedings and provide  
13 assistance on immigrant status issues.

14         SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                 or so  
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for  
17 the department of labor and industrial relations, office of  
18 community services to contract with non-profit providers to  
19 provide low-income immigrants with legal counsel to assist and  
20 represent them in immigration proceedings and provide assistance  
21 on immigrant status issues.



1           The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
2 labor and industrial relations for the purposes of this Act.

3           SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

DLIR; Immigrants; Immigration Proceedings; Legal Counsel;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Office of Community Services to contract with non-profit service providers for legal counsel to assist and represent low-income immigrants in immigration proceedings and immigrant status issues. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

