

JAN 23 2020

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that an urgent need
2 exists for greater access to mental health services at the
3 University of Hawaii. Nationally, the percentage of teenagers
4 and young adults who report mental distress, depression, and
5 suicidal ideations has increased significantly over the past
6 decade among those aged twenty-six and younger. As anxiety and
7 depression swells among students across the nation, student
8 counseling centers in Hawaii, like their mainland counterparts,
9 are unable to keep up with demand.

10 Mental health counselors in Hawaii have also noticed the
11 issues students show up with are becoming more serious. At the
12 University of Hawaii at Manoa, for instance, anxiety diagnoses
13 have surpassed depression diagnoses, and suicidal ideations have
14 increased in number, according to officials.

15 Furthermore, Leeward community college, whose enrollment is
16 6,568 students--the highest of any University of Hawaii
17 community college--does not have any psychologists on staff and



1 refers students to the University of Hawaii at west Oahu.
2 Mental health counselor-to-student ratios are much more severe
3 at community college campuses. Only two of the University of
4 Hawaii campuses meet the International Association of Counseling
5 Services' recommended ratio of one professional to one thousand
6 to one thousand five hundred students.

7 The purpose of this Act is to increase students' access to
8 mental health services across the University of Hawaii system by
9 appropriating funds for additional psychiatrist, psychologist,
10 and counselor positions at all campuses.

11 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
13 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
14 additional psychiatrist, psychologist, and counselor positions
15 at all campuses of the University of Hawaii system.

16 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of
17 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.



S.B. NO. 3147

1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.

2

INTRODUCED BY: Rosalyn de Baka



S.B. NO. 3147

Report Title:

UH; Mental Health Services; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to increase access to mental health services across the University of Hawaii system.

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