
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO POVERTY REDUCTION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that more than
2 thirty-three per cent of Hawaii's residents live in "ALICE"
3 households, or households that are employed but asset limited
4 and income constrained. These households have no financial
5 safety net for emergencies and are employed but with incomes too
6 low to support the State's basic cost of living. According to
7 Aloha United Way's 2023 report "ALICE In the Crosscurrents:
8 COVID and Financial Hardship in Hawaii," the cost of household
9 basics in Hawaii is more than double the Federal Poverty Level.
10 The average single adult in Hawaii needs \$36,912 per year to pay
11 for basic necessities like housing, food, and transportation,
12 while the Federal Poverty Level is \$14,820 per year.

13 The legislature recognizes that, pursuant to the Hawaii
14 State Planning Act, it is the State's policy to "[a]ssist
15 individuals, especially those in need of attaining a minimally
16 adequate standard of living and those confronted by social and
17 economic hardship conditions[.]"



1 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
2 department of human services to establish state goals for
3 poverty reduction and socio-cultural advancement that support
4 the principles of the Hawaii State Planning Act by reducing by
5 fifty per cent by 2050 the number of families in the State that
6 are employed but asset limited and income constrained.

7 SECTION 2. Section 346-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
8 amended to read as follows:

9 "**§346-14 Duties generally.** Except as otherwise provided
10 by law, the department of human services shall:

11 (1) Establish and administer programs and standards, and
12 adopt rules as deemed necessary for all public
13 assistance programs;

14 (2) Establish, extend, and strengthen services for the
15 protection and care of abused or neglected children
16 and children in danger of becoming delinquent to make
17 paramount the safety and health of children who have
18 been harmed or are in life circumstances that threaten
19 harm;

20 (3) Establish and administer programs, and adopt rules as
21 deemed necessary, for the prevention of domestic and



1 sexual violence and the protection and treatment of
2 victims of domestic and sexual violence;
3 (4) Assist in preventing family breakdown;
4 (5) Place, or cooperate in placing, abused or neglected
5 children in suitable private homes or institutions and
6 place, or cooperate in placing, children in suitable
7 adoptive homes;
8 (6) Have authority to establish, maintain, and operate
9 receiving homes for the temporary care and custody of
10 abused or neglected children until suitable plans are
11 made for their care; and accept from the police and
12 other agencies, for temporary care and custody, any
13 abused or neglected child until satisfactory plans are
14 made for the child;
15 (7) Administer the medical assistance programs for
16 eligible public welfare and other medically needy
17 individuals by establishing standards, eligibility,
18 and health care participation rules, payment
19 methodologies, reimbursement allowances, systems to
20 monitor recipient and provider compliance, and



- 1 assuring compliance with federal requirements to
2 maximize federal financial participation;
- 3 (8) Cooperate with the federal government in carrying out
4 the purposes of the Social Security Act and in other
5 matters of mutual concern pertaining to public
6 welfare, public assistance, and child welfare
7 services, including the making of reports, the
8 adoption of methods of administration, and the making
9 of rules as are found by the federal government, or
10 any properly constituted authority thereunder, to be
11 necessary or desirable for the efficient operation of
12 the plans for public welfare, assistance, and child
13 welfare services or as may be necessary or desirable
14 for the receipt of financial assistance from the
15 federal government;
- 16 (9) Carry on research and compile statistics relative to
17 public and private welfare activities throughout the
18 State, including those dealing with dependence,
19 defectiveness, delinquency, and related problems;



- 1 (10) Develop plans in cooperation with other public and
2 private agencies for the prevention and treatment of
3 conditions giving rise to public welfare problems;
- 4 (11) Adopt rules governing the procedure in hearings,
5 investigations, recording, registration, determination
6 of allowances, and accounting and conduct other
7 activities as may be necessary or proper to carry out
8 this chapter;
- 9 (12) Supervise or administer any other activities
10 authorized or required by this chapter, including the
11 development of the staff of the department through
12 in-service training and educational leave to attend
13 schools and other appropriate measures, and any other
14 activities placed under the jurisdiction of the
15 department by any other law;
- 16 (13) Make, prescribe, and enforce policies and rules
17 governing the activities provided for in section
18 346-31 it deems advisable, including the allocation of
19 moneys available for assistance to persons assigned to
20 work projects among the several counties or to
21 particular projects where the apportionment has not



1 been made pursuant to other provisions of law, if any,
2 governing expenditures of the funds;

3 (14) Determine the appropriate level for the Hawaii
4 security net, by developing a tracking and monitoring
5 system to determine what segments of the population
6 are not able to afford the basic necessities of life,
7 and advise the legislature annually regarding the
8 resources required to maintain the security net at the
9 appropriate level;

10 (15) Subject to the appropriation of state funds and
11 availability of federal matching assistance, expand
12 optional health care to low-income persons as follows:

13 (A) Pregnant women and infants under one year of age
14 living in families with incomes up to one hundred
15 eighty-five per cent of the federal poverty level
16 and without any asset restrictions;

17 (B) Children under six years of age living in
18 families with incomes up to one hundred
19 thirty-three per cent of the federal poverty
20 level and without any asset restrictions;



- 1 (C) Older children to the extent permitted under
- 2 optional federal medicaid rules;
- 3 (D) Elder persons;
- 4 (E) Aliens;
- 5 (F) The homeless; and
- 6 (G) Other handicapped and medically needy persons;
- 7 [~~and~~]

8 (16) Subject to the appropriation of state funds and
9 availability of federal matching assistance, establish
10 the income eligibility level for the medically needy
11 program at one hundred thirty-three per cent of the
12 assistance allowance~~[-]~~; and

13 (17) Establish state goals for poverty reduction and
14 socio-cultural advancement that support the principles
15 of the Hawaii State Planning Act by reducing by fifty
16 percent by 2050 the number of families in the State
17 that are employed but asset limited and income
18 constrained."

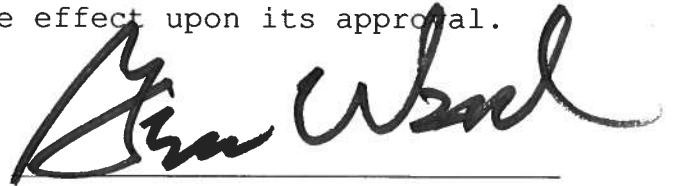
19 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
20 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Wood", written over a horizontal line.

JAN 19 2024



H.B. NO. 2038

Report Title:

DHS; ALICE; State Planning Act; Poverty Reduction

Description:

Requires the Department of Human Services to establish state goals for poverty reduction and socio-cultural advancement that support the principles of the Hawaii State Planning Act by reducing by 50% by 2050 the number of families in the State that are employed but asset limited and income constrained.

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