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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ORAL HEALTH.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's oral health  
2 program is not meeting the needs of residents. Unlike forty-two  
3 other states, the State's department of health does not have  
4 dedicated oral health staff to assess and monitor the  
5 population's oral health status, community needs, and assets;  
6 inform and educate people about oral health; mobilize community  
7 partners to leverage resources; develop, champion, and implement  
8 policies, laws, and plans that support oral health efforts;  
9 reduce barriers to care; assure a competent and skilled public  
10 and private oral health workforce; and improve public oral  
11 health functions through ongoing evaluation and continuous  
12 quality improvement.

13           The legislature further finds that the adult medicaid  
14 population has limited access to dental care. While there are  
15 over 288,000 adults with medicaid dental benefits, there is a  
16 lack of dental providers for this population. Additionally,  
17 while federally qualified health centers in each county are a



1 critical medical and oral health safety net, in 2021, about  
2 forty-two thousand people of all ages and covered by all types  
3 of health insurance were served by the health centers.

4 The legislature additionally finds that while the  
5 department of health operates five small dental clinics and  
6 serves individuals who are elderly, blind, intellectually  
7 disabled, developmentally disabled, and mentally ill at the  
8 Hawaii state hospital, all clinics are located in the city and  
9 county of Honolulu. The State does not operate dental clinics  
10 to serve similar populations on the neighbor islands. The  
11 legislature notes that three hundred thirty-nine dentists in the  
12 State currently accept and treat adults on medicaid.

13 While the legislature allocated over \$25,000,000 in 2022 to  
14 reinstate adult medicaid dental benefits, the legislature is  
15 concerned that the current oral health infrastructure is  
16 insufficient to deliver oral health services to those most in  
17 need.

18 The purpose of this Act is to:

19 (1) Establish an oral health task force to review  
20 information and data on the status of oral health in



1 the State and make recommendations to improve the  
2 State's oral health infrastructure; and

3 (2) Appropriate funds to help facilitate the work of the  
4 oral health task force.

5 SECTION 2. (a) There is established an oral health task  
6 force to be placed within the department of health for  
7 administrative purposes.

8 (b) The oral health task force shall:

9 (1) Review all existing information and data relating to  
10 oral health status in Hawaii, including the Hawaii  
11 Oral Health Coalition 2022-2023 environmental scan,  
12 for evidence of key oral health issues and evident  
13 areas for action;

14 (2) Review all existing information and data relating to  
15 the department of health oral health program functions  
16 and processes and make recommendations regarding  
17 organizational structure, personnel needs, contracted  
18 service needs, required resources, and potential  
19 additional funding and support;

20 (3) Review and analyze systemic issues in oral health  
21 services and processes statewide and make



1 recommendations on systemic changes and improvements  
2 to improve equity in oral health;

3 (4) Develop an oral health strategic blueprint that  
4 includes goals, objectives, specific actions, and  
5 resources needed;

6 (5) Act as a systemic facilitator for key oral health  
7 stakeholders so that complex and problematic issues  
8 can be discussed and addressed in a timely and  
9 effective manner;

10 (6) Ensure that there are agreed-upon community metrics  
11 for analyzing the development and implementation of  
12 medicaid funding for oral health; and

13 (7) Make recommendations to state and county policymakers  
14 regarding systemic actions recommended to improve oral  
15 health in Hawaii.

16 (c) The oral health task force shall consist of the  
17 following members:

18 (1) One representative of the family health services  
19 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
20 by the director of health;



- 1 (2) One representative of the developmental disabilities  
2 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
3 by the director of health;
- 4 (3) One representative of the med-QUEST division of the  
5 department of human services, to be appointed by the  
6 director of human services;
- 7 (4) One representative of the student services branch of  
8 the department of education, to be appointed by the  
9 superintendent of education;
- 10 (5) One representative of the Hawaii Oral Health  
11 Coalition, to be invited by the president of the  
12 senate;
- 13 (6) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Association,  
14 to be invited by the speaker of the house of  
15 representatives;
- 16 (7) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Service, to be  
17 invited by the president of the senate;
- 18 (8) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Service  
19 Foundation, to be invited by the speaker of the house  
20 of representatives;



- 1           (9) One representative of the Hawaii dental medicaid  
2           insurer, to be invited by the president of the senate;
- 3           (10) Two community advocates for medicaid and oral health,  
4           to be invited by the speaker of the house of  
5           representatives and president of the senate,  
6           respectively;
- 7           (11) One representative of the state council on  
8           developmental disabilities, to be appointed by the  
9           speaker of the house of representatives;
- 10          (12) One representative of the Hawaii Primary Care  
11          Association, to be invited by the president of the  
12          senate;
- 13          (13) One representative of the Native Hawaiian Health Care  
14          Systems, to be invited by the speaker of the house of  
15          representatives;
- 16          (14) One representative of Papa Ola Lokahi, to be invited  
17          by the president of the senate;
- 18          (15) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Hygienists'  
19          Association, to be invited by the speaker of the house  
20          of representatives;



1           (16) One representative of the county of Hawaii, who is a  
2           department of health employee or community oral health  
3           representative, to be appointed by the president of  
4           the senate;

5           (17) One representative of the county of Maui, to be  
6           appointed by the speaker of the house of  
7           representatives;

8           (18) One representative of the county of Kauai, to be  
9           appointed by the president of the senate;

10          (19) A faculty member of the university of Hawaii at Manoa  
11          Nancy Atmospera-Walch school of nursing dental hygiene  
12          program, to be appointed by the speaker of the house  
13          of representatives; and

14          (20) One representative of the university of Hawaii John A.  
15          Burns school of medicine, to be appointed by the  
16          president of the senate.

17          (d) The representative of the family health services  
18          division of the department of health shall serve as the  
19          chairperson of the task force. If the representative of the  
20          family health services division of the department of health is  
21          unable to serve as the chairperson of the task force, the



1 members of the task force shall select a chairperson from among  
2 the remaining members.

3 (e) The oral health task force shall submit an interim  
4 report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature no  
5 later than December 1, 2024. The department of health shall  
6 submit, pursuant to section 321-63, Hawaii Revised Statutes, a  
7 final report of the oral health task force's findings and  
8 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
9 legislature no later than December 1, 2025.

10 (f) The task force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2026.

11 SECTION 3. 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 2023-2024 and  
14 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
15 year 2024-2025 for the family health services division of the  
16 department of health to administer a contract to hire a  
17 consultant to facilitate the work of the oral health task force,  
18 including completing the interim and final reports required by  
19 subsection (e) of section 2 of this Act.

20 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
21 of health for the purposes of this Act.





1 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
4 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
5 year 2024-2025 for the establishment of one permanent full-time  
6 equivalent (1.0 FTE) program specialist IV position and one  
7 permanent full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) program specialist V  
8 position within the family health services division of the  
9 department of health to oversee the contract to hire a  
10 consultant to facilitate the work of the oral health task force  
11 to strengthen the oral health program in the State.

12 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
13 of health for the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



**Report Title:**

Oral Health; Task Force; Department of Health; Positions;  
Reports; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes an Oral Health Task Force to review the status of oral health in the State and make recommendations to improve the State's oral health infrastructure. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

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

