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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that suicide accounts for  
2           twenty-five per cent of all fatal injuries in the State. The  
3           legislature also finds that in 2019, suicide was the leading  
4           cause of death for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders  
5           between the ages of fifteen to twenty-four. That same year,  
6           Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders were three times less  
7           likely to receive mental health services or prescription  
8           medications for mental health treatment, compared to  
9           Non-Hispanic Whites.

10           Suicide attempts, like suicide deaths, have harmful,  
11           lasting, and profound impacts on families and communities. For  
12           every person who dies by suicide, more than thirty others will  
13           attempt to take their own lives. Thus, it is important to mount  
14           a coordinated approach to preventing suicide and suicide  
15           attempts, particularly in vulnerable Native Hawaiian and Pacific  
16           Islander communities that already experience higher rates of



1 poverty and incarceration in relation to other groups in the  
2 State.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish within the  
4 department of health a task force to reduce the suicide rate  
5 among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the State.

6 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department  
7 of health for administrative purposes a task force to reduce the  
8 suicide rate among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the  
9 State. The task force shall:

- 10 (1) Study current mental health practices by, and  
11 culturally appropriate suicide prevention models for,  
12 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders;
  - 13 (2) Recommend best practices, including general and  
14 specific policies and procedures, for increasing the  
15 effectiveness of suicide prevention models among  
16 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders; and
  - 17 (3) Determine potential reasons for the high rate of  
18 suicide among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders;
- 19 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:



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- 1           (1) One representative of the department of health's  
2           injury prevention and control section, to be selected  
3           by the director of health;
- 4           (2) One representative of the department of education, to  
5           be selected by the superintendent of education;
- 6           (3) One representative of the department of public safety  
7           or its successor agency, to be selected by the  
8           director of public safety or the director of the  
9           successor agency;
- 10          (4) One representative of the department of human  
11          services, to be selected by the director of human  
12          services;
- 13          (5) One representative of the judiciary, to be selected by  
14          the chief justice of the Hawaii supreme court;
- 15          (6) One representative of the department of psychiatry of  
16          the John A. Burns school of medicine, to be selected  
17          by the dean of the John A. Burns school of medicine;
- 18          (7) One representative of each county, to be selected by  
19          the governor;



1           (8) One representative of the Youth Suicide Prevention  
2           Leadership Council, to be selected by the director of  
3           health;

4           (9) One representative to be selected by the executive  
5           director of Mental Health America of Hawaii, to be  
6           invited by the governor; and

7           (10) Two members who are survivors of attempted suicide, to  
8           be invited by the governor.

9           To the extent possible, all task force members shall have  
10          expertise in fields or disciplines related to suicide prevention  
11          and education in or awareness of suicide prevention, preferably  
12          with a focus on Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander  
13          populations.

14          Any vacancies in the task force shall be filled in the  
15          manner provided for by the original appointments.

16          (c) Upon the initial meeting of the task force, to occur  
17          no later than sixty days after the effective date of this Act,  
18          its members shall elect a chair and vice chair and any other  
19          necessary officers from among the appointed members. A majority  
20          of the task force shall constitute a quorum to conduct business.



1 (d) The chair shall seek to maintain a balanced  
2 representation of interests and the inclusion of all interested  
3 community members and may select additional task force members  
4 at the chair's discretion.

5 (e) All meetings of the task force shall be public. The  
6 task force shall meet no less often than quarterly. At the  
7 discretion of the chair or at the request of a majority of its  
8 members, the task force may hold additional public meetings as  
9 it deems necessary.

10 (f) Members of the task force shall serve on a voluntary  
11 basis and without compensation.

12 (g) The task force shall submit a report of its findings  
13 and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
14 governor and legislature no later than twenty days prior to the  
15 convening of the regular session of 2025.

16 (h) The task force shall cease to exist on July 1, 2025.

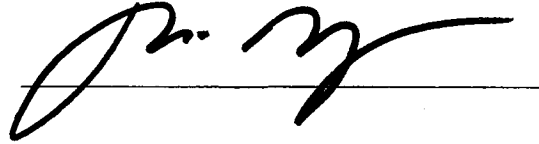
17 SECTION 3. It is not the intent of the legislature for  
18 this Act to jeopardize the receipt of any federal aid. If this  
19 Act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that  
20 are a prescribed condition for the allocation of federal funds  
21 to the State, this Act shall be deemed void.



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 be "J. M.", is written over a horizontal line.

JAN 20 2023



# H.B. NO. 622

**Report Title:**

Native Hawaiians; Pacific Islanders; Suicide Prevention; Task Force

**Description:**

Establishes within the Department of Health a task force to reduce the suicide rate among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the State.

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

