
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO IMMIGRATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there are many
2 immigrants who seek to continue legal residence or obtain legal
3 status in the country. However, the immigration court process
4 is highly complex, which may be intimidating or overwhelming for
5 immigrants who may struggle with navigating a different culture
6 and language. Many immigrants may lack the resources to obtain
7 legal representation, which may have a profound impact on the
8 immigrants' ability to receive a fair hearing.

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



1 Given the current political climate and the number of
2 immigrants being detained and faced with deportation, immigrants
3 in Hawaii are in dire need of legal help. Therefore, there are
4 vital public policy reasons behind providing legal assistance
5 and legal counsel to immigrants in immigration proceedings.

6 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
7 funds to the Department of Human Services to contract with non-
8 profit providers to provide access to legal counsel to
9 immigrants in immigration proceedings.

10 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much
12 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
13 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
14 2020-2021 to the department of human services to contract with
15 non-profit organizations to provide legal assistance and legal
16 counsel to immigrants in immigration proceedings.

17 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
18 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on March 15, 2050.



Report Title:

Immigrants; Immigration Proceedings; Legal Counsel; Department of Human Services; Appropriation

Description:

Makes an appropriation to the Department of Human Services to contract with non-profit providers to provide access to legal counsel to immigrants in immigration proceedings. Takes effect 3/15/2050. (SD2)

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