

JAN 25 2023

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII HEALTHY AGING PARTNERSHIP.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii healthy
2 aging partnership was established in 2003 to improve the health
3 status of older adults by empowering residents to make healthy
4 decisions and engage in healthier lifestyles. Since the
5 partnership's formation, the partnership has successfully
6 adapted evidence-based health promotion programs and disease
7 prevention programs for Hawaii's multicultural population.
8 Participants may engage in two evidenced-based interventions:
9 Better Choices Better Health (Ke Ola Pono, or "living well")
10 empowers and teaches participants to manage chronic disease, and
11 EnhanceFitness offers an effective research-driven exercise
12 program to improve the overall functional fitness and well-being
13 of older adults. Due to the many accomplishments of the Hawaii
14 healthy aging partnership, the partnership received the 2013
15 multicultural aging award from the American Society on Aging.
16 This accomplishment brought further recognition to the



1 partnership's role in improving the health of Hawaii's diverse
2 aging population.

3 The legislature also finds that Act 103, Session Laws of
4 Hawaii 2017, and Act 124, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019,
5 appropriated state funds for the healthy aging partnership for
6 fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2019-2020, respectively, but the
7 partnership did not receive state funding for fiscal years 2018-
8 2019 and 2020-2022. The partnership also receives a small
9 amount of supplemental funding from county appropriations and
10 federal funds from the Older Americans Act.

11 The legislature further finds that when the coronavirus
12 disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic broke out in Hawaii, the
13 healthy aging partnership was forced to close all EnhanceFitness
14 sites and cancel Better Choices Better Health workshops and
15 trainings due to the State's prohibitions against in-person
16 classes. A survey of EnhanceFitness participants on the impacts
17 of COVID-19 found that nearly all active participants were
18 negatively impacted by the pandemic and felt their health had
19 declined. The survey also showed that kupuna needed access to
20 safe and effective health promotion activities. To overcome
21 these challenges, the healthy aging partnership developed



1 activities in alternative formats. As of October 2021, the
2 program has served more than three hundred ninety-two kupuna
3 during the pandemic.

4 More than sixty-five participants in Kauai county attended
5 modified exercise classes online, and more than ninety
6 participants in Maui county joined via a televised airing. When
7 pandemic restrictions eased, the healthy aging partnership
8 started offering in-person small group EnhanceFitness classes.
9 These classes served ninety-seven kupuna in Kauai county.
10 Virtual EnhanceFitness classes continued to serve sixty kupuna
11 in Maui county.

12 Better Choices Better Health offered its chronic disease
13 self-management education remotely by mailing toolkits to
14 participants and holding classes via telephone for those who
15 were not tech-savvy. These classes had fifty-seven participants
16 in Kauai county, Hawaii county, and the city and county of
17 Honolulu. Virtual workshops served sixteen participants in the
18 city and county of Honolulu, and asynchronous online classes
19 served seven participants from Kauai county and the city and
20 county of Honolulu.



1 Preliminary evaluation findings show that, during the
2 pandemic, the EnhanceFitness and Better Choices Better Health
3 programs remained effective in all outcome measures.
4 Additionally, healthy aging partnership partners have gained
5 skills and experience in offering programming in alternative
6 formats. As COVID-19 restrictions ease, the healthy aging
7 partnership is ready to scale up programs in both remote and in-
8 person formats to help more kupuna stay healthy. However,
9 limited funding for the partnership inhibits programs from
10 continuing and expanding to meet the needs of kupuna.
11 Currently, the partnership depends on stretching the state
12 appropriation for fiscal year 2019-2020 to maintain certain
13 program activities.

14 The legislature recognizes that, without continued funding,
15 the Hawaii healthy aging partnership may be forced to end. As a
16 result, the executive office on aging will fail to meet the
17 first goal of the Hawaii state plan on aging to maximize
18 opportunities for older adults to age well, remain active, and
19 enjoy life in their communities.



S.B. NO. 1419

Report Title:

Hawaii Healthy Aging Partnership; Executive Office on Aging;
Department of Health; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the Executive Office on Aging within the
Department of Health for the Hawaii Healthy Aging Partnership.

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