

JAN 20 2010

A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR GENERAL ASSISTANCE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the department of
2 human services reduced the amount of general assistance from
3 \$450 per month to \$300 per month, effective November 1, 2009,
4 due to the State's declining revenues in the recessionary
5 economy. According to the department of human services, an
6 appropriation of \$6,066,000 is needed to reinstate general
7 assistance benefits at the amount of \$450 per month at the
8 current caseload of 5,055 cases per month. As the current
9 caseload is increasing, the urgency of providing adequate
10 funding has also increased.

11 The general assistance program provides cash benefits for
12 food, clothing, shelter, and other essentials to adults ages
13 eighteen through sixty-four, without minor dependents, who are
14 temporarily disabled and who do not qualify for social security
15 benefits. Assets may not exceed \$2,000 for a single person and
16 \$3,000 for a couple to maintain eligibility. To be eligible, an
17 adult must have little or no income, must not qualify for a
18 federal category of assistance, and must be certified by a



1 department of human services medical board to be unable to
2 engage in any substantial employment of at least thirty hours
3 per week for a period of at least sixty days. The general
4 assistance program is funded by an appropriation from the
5 legislature each year. The goal of general assistance is to
6 provide temporary economic assistance to those eligible for
7 financial support to ensure they receive at least a minimally
8 adequate standard of living.

9 The legislature finds that a general assistance benefit of
10 \$300 per month is woefully inadequate for anyone to maintain
11 even a bare living. The legislature further finds that the
12 emergency and budget reserve fund is intended to be used to
13 provide a temporary supplemental source of funding for the State
14 during times of emergency, economic downturn, and unforeseen
15 reduction in revenues.

16 The purpose of this Act is to make an appropriation from
17 the emergency and budget reserve fund for the general assistance
18 program of the department of human services.

19 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the emergency and
20 budget reserve fund under section 328L-3, Hawaii Revised
21 Statutes, the sum of \$6,066,000 or so much thereof as may be
22 necessary for fiscal year 2010-2011 for the general assistance



1 program under section 346-71, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to
2 restore the general assistance benefit amount to \$450 per month
3 or as close to \$450 per month as possible, given the monthly
4 caseload.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
6 human services for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2010.
8

INTRODUCED BY:

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Report Title:

Emergency and Budget Reserve Fund; General Assistance
Appropriation

Description:

Makes appropriation out of the emergency and budget reserve fund
for the general assistance program.

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

