

JAN 19 2012

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HOMELESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that homelessness in
2 Hawaii is a serious concern and the economic and non-economic
3 cost of homelessness can be severe. According to the most
4 recent Homeless Point-in-Time Count, there were 2,556
5 unsheltered homeless persons and 3,632 sheltered homeless
6 persons statewide. Nearly forty per cent of unsheltered
7 homeless persons were determined to be chronically homeless.
8 According to a study of hospital admissions of homeless people
9 in the State, 1,751 homeless adults were responsible for 564
10 hospitalizations and \$4,000,000 in admissions costs.
11 Additionally, homeless individuals may spend more time in jail
12 or prison, resulting in higher costs to taxpayers and the State.
13 Repeated incarcerations may be a temporary solution that keeps
14 homeless individuals from disturbing the public, but it fails to
15 address underlying chronic issues such as addiction and mental
16 health needs.

17 The legislature further finds that confronting issues such
18 as substance abuse and mental illness is an important step in



1 ending the cycle of repeated hospitalizations and incarcerations
2 common in vulnerable homeless individuals. The legislature also
3 finds that one method of addressing these issues is to establish
4 a triage center dedicated to serving the homeless population.
5 The goal of the triage center would be to operate as a
6 pre-arrest diversion program. The center would be a voluntary
7 alternative to incarceration and inappropriate emergency room
8 utilization, and would target low-level offenders. The center
9 would also serve as a low-demand shelter and would provide case
10 management services, medical assessments, resources, substance
11 abuse treatment, and behavioral health services for individuals
12 with substance abuse problems or mental health needs.

13 The legislature also finds that funding for mental health
14 services and substance abuse treatment has been drastically
15 reduced over the past few years. Appropriate funding for these
16 services is essential for the success of the triage center and
17 for the health and well-being of vulnerable populations in the
18 State.

19 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 20 (1) Require and appropriate funds for the department of
21 health to develop a triage center pilot program for
22 homeless persons; and



1 (2) Appropriate funds for mental health services and
2 substance abuse treatment.

3 SECTION 2. (a) The department of health shall establish a
4 three-year triage center pilot program in a county with a
5 population greater than five hundred thousand that focuses on
6 serving homeless individuals with substance abuse issues or
7 mental illness. The triage center pilot program shall serve as
8 a pre-arrest diversion program and shall provide case management
9 services, medical assessments, resources, substance abuse
10 treatment, and behavioral health services.

11 (b) The department of health shall work in cooperation
12 with local hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, law enforcement
13 agencies, and homeless service providers when establishing the
14 triage center pilot program.

15 (c) The department of health shall submit a progress
16 report of the pilot program to the legislature no later than
17 twenty days prior to the convening of the 2013, 2014, and 2015
18 regular sessions and a final report, including recommendations
19 regarding the continuation or expansion of the pilot program, to
20 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening
21 of the 2016 regular session.



1 SECTION 3. 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 2012-2013 for
4 the establishment of a triage center pilot program for homeless
5 individuals with substance abuse issues or mental illness.

6 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
7 health for the purposes of this Act.

8 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
10 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013 to
11 provide case management services at the triage center.

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

14 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013 for
17 mental health services for the homeless.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
19 health for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general
21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so



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1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013 for
2 substance abuse treatment efforts for the homeless.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
4 health for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2012, and
6 shall be repealed on June 30, 2015.

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S.B. NO. 2118

Report Title:

Homeless; Department of Health; Triage Centers; Mental Health;
Substance Abuse; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the department of health to establish a triage center pilot program that focuses on serving homeless individuals with substance abuse issues or mental illness. Appropriates funds for the establishment of the triage center and case management services. Appropriates funds for mental health services and substance abuse treatment efforts. Repeals 6/30/2015.

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