
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FAMILY COURT.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii family
2 court lacks sufficient financial resources to meet the growing
3 demands placed on it by the public. Heavy caseloads make it
4 increasingly difficult for judges to make rulings on important
5 matters in a timely manner and can prevent cases from being
6 resolved in an expeditious and cost-effective manner.
7 Approximately fifty thousand litigants went through family court
8 last year, and with numbers constantly on the rise, family court
9 receives more motions and cases than any other court in the
10 State. In 2013, the three domestic division judges handled
11 approximately four thousand divorce and custody cases, the four
12 juvenile division judges handled over two thousand one hundred
13 juvenile and child abuse cases, and the three special division
14 judges handled eleven thousand five hundred restraining order,
15 paternity, adoption, involuntary commitment, and guardianship
16 hearings. As an example of the delay this creates for the
17 public, in 2013 the wait time for a post-decree divorce motion
18 hearing was five months.



1 The legislature further finds that an additional family
2 court judge position would decrease delays and expenses in
3 family court litigation and, most importantly, allow judges to
4 have adequate time to resolve the cases and disputes that affect
5 every part of the community. A lack of funding has prevented
6 the family court from creating a new family court judge
7 position. The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to
8 allow the judiciary to hire an additional family court judge and
9 three support staff for the first judicial circuit.

10 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 to
13 fund one additional permanent full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE)
14 family court judge position, two additional permanent full-time
15 equivalent (2.00 FTE) circuit court clerk II positions, and one
16 additional permanent full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) court
17 bailiff position in the family court of the first judicial
18 circuit.

19 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary for
20 the purposes of this Act.

21 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2030.



Report Title:

Family Court; Judge; Support Staff; Appropriation

Description:

Provides funds to the judiciary for one judge and three support staff for the family court of the first judicial circuit.

Effective 7/1/2030. Appropriation. (SD1)

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