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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PROJECT KEALAHOU.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that despite intervention  
2 efforts, girls are at greater risk than boys for sexual abuse,  
3 running away, truancy, suicide, prostitution, and further  
4 victimization. Moreover, many teen girls face immense  
5 challenges brought on by unplanned pregnancy. According to the  
6 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, pregnancy and birth  
7 are significant contributors to high school dropout rates among  
8 girls. These and other challenges require interventions  
9 tailored to the unique psychosocial and interpersonal  
10 characteristics of girls.

11           Project Kealahou was developed in response to broad  
12 recognition by leaders and workers in the State's public youth  
13 service system that adolescent girls face challenges that  
14 established treatment programs do not adequately address. This  
15 six-year, federally-funded program, housed in the department of  
16 health child and adolescent mental health division, promotes  
17 community-based, individualized, culturally- and linguistically-



1 competent, family-driven, youth-guided, and evidence-based  
2 services. In addition to these standard system of care  
3 principles, Project Kealahou emphasizes gender-responsive and  
4 trauma-informed care when serving its target population of  
5 adolescent females ages eleven through twenty-one who have  
6 experienced significant trauma in their lives.

7 Project Kealahou also offers a relatively low-cost array of  
8 community-based services and supports that provide cost-  
9 effective deterrents and alternatives to more expensive and  
10 disruptive out-of-home placements for youth, as well as a range  
11 of cultural and recreational community-based group activities to  
12 help youth and their families reconnect with each other and  
13 their communities.

14 The legislature finds that federal funding of Project  
15 Kealahou will phase out in October 2015, and that state funding  
16 is needed to continue and expand this cost-effective array of  
17 services to at-risk youth and their families who would otherwise  
18 not have access to these services. While Project Kealahou  
19 services are currently available throughout Oahu, ideally these  
20 services would be expanded to extend to the entire State. With  
21 legislative funding for Project Kealahou, much-needed services



1 will also be offered on the islands of Hawaii and Kauai in  
2 fiscal year 2015-2016.

3 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for Project  
4 Kealahou to ensure that the array of community-based, outpatient  
5 services and supports offered by this program are continued and  
6 expanded to meet the needs of at-risk youth, particularly  
7 adolescent females, and their families.

8 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 for the  
11 continued funding of Project Kealahou within the child and  
12 adolescent mental health division of the department of health.

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

15 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.  
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INTRODUCED BY: Alle A. Peltz

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# H.B. NO. 1435

**Report Title:**

Department of Health; Project Kealahou; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for the continued funding of Project Kealahou within the Department of Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

