
A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE OFFICE OF THE LONG-TERM CARE
OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that in the executive
2 office on aging reorganization of June 2015, the long-term care
3 ombudsman program was reduced in staff to only the director,
4 making Hawaii the only state in the country with a long-term
5 care ombudsman program staff of one. In 1995, a time when most
6 residents lived in nursing homes, the Institute of Medicine
7 recommended a minimum staffing ratio of one full-time paid
8 ombudsman for every two thousand long-term care residents.
9 Currently, Hawaii has over twelve thousand long-term care
10 residents, most of whom live in the community rather than in
11 nursing homes, which creates greater challenges. Under the 1995
12 Institute of Medicine recommendation, Hawaii should have a
13 minimum of six full-time long-term care ombudsmen.

14 The legislature further finds that the long-term care
15 ombudsman program may utilize volunteers. The long-term care
16 ombudsman program has certified close to one hundred eighty



1 volunteers since the volunteer component began in 2001, using
2 considerable time and resources for recruitment, training, and
3 retention; however, as of 2016, there were only eight ombudsman
4 volunteers. Furthermore, volunteers cannot substitute for a
5 full-time, highly trained, paid staff position.

6 The legislature also finds that in addition to visits to
7 long-term care facilities, long-term care ombudsmen respond to a
8 multitude of complaints, engage in investigations, and provide
9 information, assistance, and referrals to long-term residents
10 and their families. As of 2016, there were 1,405 long-term care
11 facilities on Oahu, 40 facilities on Kauai, 70 facilities on
12 Maui, and 187 facilities on Hawaii, for a total of 1,702
13 facilities statewide. The long-term care ombudsman program
14 lacks staff to visit each facility on a quarterly basis, let
15 alone facilitate resident and family councils, provide more
16 community education, and work more closely with neighbor island
17 county councils and the area agencies on aging. The legislature
18 additionally finds that the long-term care ombudsman program
19 requires resources to ensure that the neighbor islands' kupuna
20 and their families receive the same equal access to the services



1 provided by the long-term care ombudsman program as Oahu has
2 received since 1975.

3 The purpose of this Act is to support the long-term care
4 ombudsman program on the island of Oahu and allocate funds for
5 contracted services through the office of the long-term care
6 ombudsman in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui.

7 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$150,000 or so much
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
10 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
11 2018-2019 for the long-term care ombudsman program to support
12 the long-term care ombudsman program on the island of Oahu and
13 provide funding for contracted services through the office of
14 the long-term care ombudsman in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai,
15 and Maui; provided that the appropriation shall be distributed
16 as follows:

- 17 (1) Office of the long-term care ombudsman
- 18 for the city and county of Honolulu \$75,000;
- 19 (2) Office of the long-term care ombudsman
- 20 for the county of Hawaii \$25,000;



- 1 (3) Office of the long-term care ombudsman
- 2 for the county of Kauai \$25,000; and
- 3 (4) Office of the long-term care ombudsman
- 4 for the county of Maui \$25,000.

5 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the executive
6 office on aging for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Gregory Tabor
Shuan C. De
Linda deChingone
Calvin K. King
Richard King
Rony M. Smith
Cynthia Huelten
John M. [unclear]
Cal [unclear]
Jay DeLoach
Amy [unclear]



H.B. NO. 610

Report Title:

Long-term Care Ombudsman; Long-term Care Ombudsman Program;
Appropriation; Kupuna Caucus

Description:

Appropriates \$150,000 to the office of the long-term care ombudsman to support the long-term care ombudsman on Oahu and provide funds for contracted services through the office of the long-term care ombudsman in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui.

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