
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO VETERANS TREATMENT COURT.

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

1 SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds
2 to continue the third circuit's veterans treatment court, which
3 is intended and designed to recognize and address the unique
4 needs of veterans entering the criminal justice system.

5 The legislature finds that many veterans who enter the
6 criminal justice system suffer from mental illness and substance
7 abuse issues arising from their service to our country. The
8 Bureau of Justice Assistance found that eighty-one per cent of
9 all veterans involved in the justice system had a substance
10 abuse problem prior to incarceration, thirty-five per cent were
11 identified as suffering from alcohol dependency, twenty-three
12 per cent had been homeless in the prior year, and twenty-five
13 per cent were identified as mentally ill. The underlying cause
14 for the incarceration of many of these veterans was often post-
15 traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, a substance
16 use disorder, or a combination of any of the three.



1 The legislature further finds that veterans may be
2 apprehensive about communicating the need for help with
3 nonveterans and may need extra assistance in pursuing
4 eligibility for services offered by the Department of Veterans
5 Affairs. To address these concerns, the third circuit launched
6 a veterans treatment court for the island of Hawaii in November
7 2014 with funds from a federal grant. The veterans treatment
8 court helps to provide a combination of high level supervision,
9 mentoring, verification and monitoring of Veterans Affairs
10 services, incentives, consequences, motivation, and veteran-
11 specific treatment planning that address the diverse needs of
12 veterans in the criminal justice system. However, the federal
13 grant expired at the end of September 2017. Therefore, funds
14 are necessary to continue the veterans treatment court on the
15 island of Hawaii.

16 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to authorize
17 additional positions and appropriate funding for the judiciary.

18 SECTION 2. (a) The judiciary may convert one temporary
19 social worker IV position into a full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
20 permanent social worker IV position and establish one additional
21 full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent social worker IV



1 position to support the veterans treatment court in the third
2 circuit.

3 (b) There is appropriated out of the general revenues of
4 the State of Hawaii the sum of \$105,912 or so much thereof as
5 may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 to fund the positions
6 authorized in subsection (a).

7 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary for
8 the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

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H.B. NO. 1965

Report Title:

Veterans Treatment Court; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the veterans treatment court on the island of Hawaii.

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