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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO A SENIOR ADVOCATE PROGRAM.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's senior  
2 population is quickly growing. In 2015, persons sixty-five  
3 years of age or older comprised more than sixteen per cent of  
4 the population. This figure is expected to reach twenty-two per  
5 cent by 2030. The legislature also finds that nearly twenty per  
6 cent of Hawaii's seniors live alone. While a person should not  
7 be considered vulnerable merely because of advanced age, the  
8 legislative believes that seniors are at greater risk of  
9 isolation and abuse.

10           The legislature further finds that other states have  
11 programs in which unpaid volunteers from the community are  
12 trained by the court to assist seniors who are unable to handle  
13 their personal affairs or protect their own interests, or just  
14 need a friend to confide in. Volunteers may assist by  
15 monitoring finances, health care, and other areas of concern.  
16 Volunteers may also investigate whether a vulnerable senior is  
17 an appropriate candidate for a guardianship and ensure



1 compliance with court orders after a guardianship has been  
2 established. Rather than duplicate existing court efforts,  
3 these volunteers provide valuable oversight by assisting the  
4 court with additional insights and information about the  
5 senior's situation. The legislature believes that Hawaii's  
6 seniors would greatly benefit from this type of program.

7 The purpose of this Act is to require the judiciary to  
8 study the feasibility of establishing a volunteer-based senior  
9 advocate program in the family courts of the State that would  
10 complement existing efforts to assist persons involved in adult  
11 protective proceedings pursuant to chapter 346, Hawaii Revised  
12 Statutes.

13 SECTION 2. (a) The judiciary shall study the feasibility  
14 of establishing a volunteer-based senior advocate program in the  
15 family courts of the State that would complement existing  
16 efforts to assist persons involved in adult protective  
17 proceedings pursuant to chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

18 The factors to be studied shall include:

19 (1) Screening of program volunteers, including criminal  
20 history record checks;



1 (2) Volunteer training and certification requirements and  
2 procedures;

3 (3) Program rules and operating procedures; and

4 (4) Financial costs associated with:

5 (A) Acquisition of office space or other physical  
6 facilities necessary to operate the program;

7 (B) Training and certification of volunteers;

8 (C) Reimbursement to volunteers for transportation,  
9 parking, or other expenses incurred in the  
10 performance of volunteer duties; and

11 (D) Other foreseeable operational costs.

12 (b) The judiciary shall submit a report of its feasibility  
13 study, including its findings, recommendations, and any proposed  
14 legislation regarding the factors specified in subsection (a),  
15 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the  
16 convening of the regular session of 2020.

17 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Seniors; Senior Advocate Program; Judiciary; Feasibility Study

**Description:**

Requires the Judiciary to study the feasibility of establishing a volunteer-based senior advocate program in the family courts of the State that would complement existing efforts to assist persons involved in adult protective proceedings pursuant to chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Requires a report to the 2020 Legislature. (HB2242 HD1)

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

