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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1       SECTION 1. Ohana is a group of closely- or distantly-  
2 related people who share nearly everything, from land and food  
3 to responsibility for taking care of children and elders.  
4 Members of an ohana, whether or not related by blood, treat each  
5 other as extended family and share generously with each other.  
6       The legislature finds that some homelessness encampments in  
7 the islands embody this ethic of ohana and have the capacity to  
8 improve the lives of people experiencing homelessness.  
9       The legislature also finds that, while significant strides  
10 have been made, current attempts to address homelessness in  
11 Hawaii remain insufficient. Hawaii continues to have the  
12 highest number of individuals experiencing homelessness per  
13 capita of any state in the nation. Oahu, which has the highest  
14 number of individuals experiencing homelessness of any county in  
15 Hawaii, has seen the number of unsheltered individuals  
16 experiencing homelessness rise over the past five years and the



1 number of people in shelters decline during the same period  
2 despite increased investment in shelters and enforcement.

3 Therefore, the legislature finds that addressing  
4 homelessness requires the courage to try something new.

5 The legislature finds that ohana zones have the potential  
6 to serve individuals experiencing homelessness in a way that  
7 existing programs are currently unable. Ohana zones will have  
8 the goal of improving the health and well-being of individuals  
9 experiencing homelessness and providing access to needed  
10 services. The use of the term ohana is not meant to suggest that  
11 the use of an ohana zone is limited to nuclear families or  
12 people related by blood, but rather that an ohana zone provides  
13 a welcoming, safe haven where both individuals experiencing  
14 homelessness and those who serve them treat each other as an  
15 extended family.

16 Because it is unclear what costs and benefits will accrue  
17 using the new model of an ohana zone, the legislature finds that  
18 these costs and benefits should be carefully studied, and that  
19 ohana zones should, at least initially, be temporary.

20 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pilot program for  
21 the establishment of ohana zones, with the goal of improving the



1 health and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness  
2 and providing individuals experiencing homelessness with needed  
3 services.

4 SECTION 2. Definitions. For purposes of this Act:

5 "Department" means the department of human services.

6 "Homeless" means the same as in section 346-361, Hawaii  
7 Revised Statutes.

8 "Ohana zone" means a physical location that has a program  
9 that admits individuals experiencing homelessness, provides the  
10 individual a place to stay for a maximum of days, and  
11 provides referrals to medical or social services, with the goal  
12 of placing the individual in permanent housing.

13 SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the department  
14 for administrative purposes a three-year pilot program to be  
15 known as the ohana zone pilot program. The department, in  
16 consultation with the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness  
17 and any other appropriate agency and with people experiencing  
18 homelessness, shall serve as the administrator of the pilot  
19 program.

20 (b) The department shall consult with the department of  
21 land and natural resources and with people experiencing



1 homelessness to identify and evaluate locations in which an  
2 ohana zone may be established, beginning with the locations  
3 previously identified as potential safe zone sites in the final  
4 report submitted by the working group to examine the feasibility  
5 of safe zones pursuant to Act 212, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017.

6 The department shall also consider locations that are on  
7 private property and shall be authorized to inquire with private  
8 property landowners regarding the availability of the private  
9 property as a possible location of an ohana zone.

10 (c) The department shall consider whether there are any  
11 benefits to establishing multiple ohana zones that address  
12 specific target populations, such as individuals who are  
13 experiencing homelessness and who are frail, elderly, or victims  
14 of domestic violence, or establishing ohana zones targeting the  
15 general homeless population

16 (d) The department, in consultation with people  
17 experiencing homelessness, shall establish no later than  
18 December 31, 2018, the following:

19 (1) The criteria that the department will use to evaluate  
20 potential ohana zone locations;



1 (2) A monthly timetable of milestones that the department  
2 expects to meet in establishing one or more ohana  
3 zones over the course of the three-year pilot program;

4 (3) The specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, and  
5 time-based performance measures that the department  
6 expects to meet at the end of each fiscal year;

7 (4) The evaluation criteria and process that the  
8 department intends to use each year when reviewing the  
9 success and sustainability of the ohana zones; and

10 (5) The monitoring and oversight controls that the  
11 department will have over the ohana zones to identify,  
12 address, and prevent possible fraud, waste, and abuse  
13 and ensure compliance with local, state, and federal  
14 laws.

15 (e) The department shall establish an ohana zone at one or  
16 more of the sites approved for a ohana zone no later than June  
17 30, 2019.

18 (f) The department of human services shall submit reports  
19 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the  
20 convening of the 2019, 2020, and 2021 regular sessions.



1           (1) The report that shall be submitted no later than  
2           twenty days prior to the convening of the 2019 regular  
3           session shall include but not be limited to the  
4           following information:

5           (A) A summary and explanation of the process that the  
6           department engaged in to identify possible ohana  
7           zone locations;

8           (B) A list of the locations considered, including but  
9           not limited to physical location, whether the  
10          property was owned by state or local government  
11          or by a private landowner; the cost of obtaining  
12          the use of the property; and any remediation  
13          costs needed to make the property suitable for  
14          individuals experiencing homelessness to reside  
15          upon;

16          (C) Identification of approved and rejected ohana  
17          zone locations, and the rationale for the  
18          selection or rejection of the sites; and

19          (D) A summary of the information required under  
20          subsection (d).



(2) The reports that shall be submitted no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2020 and 2021 regular sessions shall include but not be limited to the following information:

(A) The milestones, which were previously established pursuant to subsection (d) that were met by the department and the established ohana zones during the fiscal year;

(B) An evaluation of the ohana zones to determine whether the objectives set have been met or exceeded;

(C) Any proposed changes that need to be made to the performance measures used to assess the achievement of program goals; and

(D) An assessment of the impact of the ohana zone model on the homelessness problem in Hawaii.

(g) The pilot program shall cease to exist on June 30, 2021.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 to the



4       The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
5   human services for purposes of this Act.

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: John M. Byrne

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IAN 2.4.2010

**JAN 24 2018**



# H.B. NO. 2753

**Report Title:**

Ohana Zone Pilot Program; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Ohana Zone Pilot Program. Defines the intent of the pilot program, and sets preliminary milestones that shall be met by the Department of Human Services in establishing the pilot program. Appropriates funds.

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