
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP
TO EXAMINE PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES AND DEVELOP
RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXPAND PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES IN
HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, palliative care specializes in the management of
2 physical symptoms, including nausea, pain, fatigue, and
3 shortness of breath, as well as the emotional and spiritual
4 distress caused by serious, chronic, and/or terminal conditions;
5 and

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7 WHEREAS, palliative care is defined by the World Health
8 Organization as an approach that improves the quality of life of
9 patients and their families facing the problems associated with
10 life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of
11 suffering by means of early identification and impeccable
12 assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical,
13 psychosocial, and spiritual; and

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15 WHEREAS, studies have shown that patients who had hospital-
16 based palliative care visits spent less time in intensive care
17 units and were less likely to be readmitted to the hospital
18 after returning home; and

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20 WHEREAS, in 2000, less than twenty-five percent of
21 hospitals in the United States had a palliative care program,
22 but by 2015, sixty-seven percent of hospitals in the country
23 with fifty or more beds reported having palliative care teams;
24 and

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26 WHEREAS, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
27 advocates for policies that improve the lives of cancer patients
28 by making treatment of pain and other symptoms and coordination
29 of patient care standard protocol throughout a patient's
30 treatment for cancer, starting at the point of diagnosis; and
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H.C.R. NO. 118

1 WHEREAS, Kōkua Mau, Hawaii's hospice and palliative care
2 organization, is a community benefit, nonprofit organization,
3 composed of individual and organizational champions and
4 supporters from hospitals, education, consumers, insurance,
5 long-term care, and hospices; and

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7 WHEREAS, efforts to increase the use and availability of
8 palliative care services in Hawaii require public health care
9 providers, advocates, and facilities to come together and
10 discuss the challenges and issues faced by palliative care
11 programs; and

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13 WHEREAS, the Department of Health, Kōkua Mau, American
14 Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, and other community
15 partners are all committed to improving the quality of life
16 through palliative care for people in Hawaii; now, therefore,

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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
19 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
20 of 2018, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Health is
21 requested to convene a working group, with the assistance of
22 Kōkua Mau and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network,
23 to examine palliative care services and develop recommendations
24 to expand palliative care services in the State; and

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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
27 to collaborate with hospice and palliative care organizations,
28 healthcare associations, health care facilities, insurers,
29 patient advocacy groups, and other interested public health
30 groups; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
33 to examine and identify:

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35 (1) The current state of palliative care services offered
36 in Hawaii;
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38 (2) The capacity of current palliative care providers;
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40 (3) The geographic areas where significant gaps in
41 palliative care services exist;
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- (4) Opportunities to collaborate with key stakeholders who are positioned to craft a strategy and plan for improving and expanding the provision of high-quality palliative medicine and palliative care services in Hawaii;
- (5) The feasibility for financial support of a long-term expansion of palliative care services in Hawaii;
- (6) A plan for ongoing data gathering for purposes of monitoring and quality improvement of palliative care in Hawaii;
- (7) Engagement strategies for educating the public about palliative care and hospice care to empower people to make informed decisions about wishes for care when faced with a serious illness; and
- (8) Any other strategies that would improve palliative care services in Hawaii; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2019; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that subsequent to the submission of its report to the Legislature, the working group may convene annually or as necessary to discuss and update its findings and recommendations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health, Executive Director of Kōkua Mau, and Director of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

OFFERED BY:

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