

JAN 24 2018

---

---

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TELEHEALTH.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many residents of  
2 Hawaii are unable to obtain timely and appropriate health care  
3 and behavioral health care due to shortages of primary,  
4 specialty, and behavioral care providers. Vulnerable residents,  
5 such as the elderly, experience even greater barriers to  
6 provider access. These barriers include issues relating to  
7 fixed or limited financial resources, lack of physical mobility  
8 or other disability, cognitive impairment, and transportation.

9           Telehealth is a viable solution to maximize existing local  
10 resources and increase patient convenience and compliance.  
11 However, the best available data indicates that the use of  
12 telehealth is limited in the State. No more than fifteen per  
13 cent of practicing providers in the State report a telehealth  
14 experience, even though the State has among the most progressive  
15 telehealth laws in the nation.

16           Preliminary findings from the 2017 State Telehealth Summit  
17 confirm that provider comfort and patient expectations are the



1 most significant barriers to greater telehealth adoption.  
2 Department of health research, including direct observation of  
3 strong telehealth programs in other jurisdictions, reveals that  
4 staff support is needed to assure that both the patient and  
5 technology are situated correctly for a telehealth encounter.  
6 Ideally, staff support should be situated at both the provider's  
7 and the patient's location. Support staff for the patient,  
8 however, is critical when the patient is in a non-traditional  
9 health care setting such as a home, community center, or school.

10 The purpose of this Act is to fund a pilot project to  
11 expose the State's health care providers and patients to the  
12 benefits of telehealth. The goals are to increase provider  
13 adoption of telehealth, support health care workforce  
14 development related to telehealth, and evaluate the clinical and  
15 administrative efficacy of various telehealth delivery models.

16 SECTION 2. (a) The department of health shall implement a  
17 telehealth pilot project.

18 (b) The pilot project shall:

19 (1) Assist residents at two distinct project sites, both  
20 of which shall have a medically underserved area  
21 designation by the United States Department of Health



1 and Human Services, provided that one site shall be  
2 located in a rural county and the other site shall be  
3 located in an urban county;

4 (2) Utilize telehealth as the primary means to deliver  
5 health care; and

6 (3) Include at least one federally qualified health center  
7 or rural health clinic in each project site.

8 (c) Within six months of the exhaustion of all pilot  
9 project funds, the department of health shall make available to  
10 the public an evaluation report on pilot project outcomes,  
11 including the quality of care, patient satisfaction, training  
12 and workforce development issues, and financial sustainability  
13 of telehealth activities.

14 (d) Chapters 103D and 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall  
15 not apply to procurements made pursuant to this Act.

16 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for a  
19 telehealth pilot project.

20 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
21 health for the purposes of this Act.



# S.B. NO. 2891

1 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

2

INTRODUCED BY:

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*  
Arenak Nishihara

*[Signature]*      *[Signature]*

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*



# S.B. NO. 2891

**Report Title:**

DOH; Telehealth; Pilot Program; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for the Department of Health to conduct a telehealth pilot project.

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

