



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
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February 5, 2018

The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
Twenty-Ninth Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Green and Members of the Committees:

SUBJECT: SB 2050 – Relating to Persons with Disabilities

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD) **SUPPORTS SB 2050.** The purpose of the bill is to require the Department of Human Services to implement an earned income disregard program as an intermediate step to implementing a Medicaid buy-in program.

Act 200, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012, established a joint legislative Task Force to assist in exploring the development and possible implementation of a MBI program for working individuals with disabilities based on Hawai'i's current Medicaid income and asset limits subject to approval by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Task Force was convened by Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland and the late Representative Mele Carroll. The Council is a member of the Task Force and has been engaged in discussions on establishing and implementing a MBI program for individuals with disabilities. The Task Force was in general agreement that the MBI program was a viable option to pursue to enable workers with disabilities to be employed while protecting them from losing their medical benefits and supports.

In 2015 the Task Force continued to meet to discuss various options to implementing a MBI program. One option that the Task Force fully supported and encouraged was for the DHS Med-QUEST Division (MQD) to submit a budget request for funds to start the MBI program.

In 2016, DHS MQD submitted an Executive supplemental budget request of \$293,405 in general funds with Federal Medicaid matching funds of \$344,155 for a total of \$637,560 to implement the MBI program. The request was included in the 2016 State budget bill (HB 1700 - Relating to the State Budget), under Program ID HMS 401/PE- Add funds for Ticket to Work Medicaid State Plan Services. Unfortunately, this did not transpire.

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In 2017, DHS MQD was not able to implement an Earned Income Disregard program as an interim measure.

According to the National Disability Navigator Resource Collaborative, Hawai'i is one of four states without a Medicaid Buy-in program. We are in strong support of Medicaid buy-in program for the State of Hawai'i.

We appreciate the Legislature's past involvement with the Task Force and perseverance in addressing options for individuals with disabilities to become employed and maintain their access to Medicaid.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **in support of SB 2050**.

Sincerely,



Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator