

MAR 12 2021

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO EXPAND THE KA‘U
RURAL HEALTH CLINIC TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO URGENT CARE AND
OUTPATIENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.

1 WHEREAS, individuals with pre-existing mental health
2 conditions may be particularly vulnerable in an emergency; and
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4 WHEREAS, social isolation and loneliness are closely linked
5 to poor health, with recent data from 2020 showing that a
6 significantly higher proportion of people who sheltered-in-place
7 during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) stay-at-home
8 order reported negative mental health effects resulting from
9 worry or stress compared to those who did not shelter-in-place;
10 and
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12 WHEREAS physical isolation and loneliness during the
13 COVID-19 pandemic may present specific health risks for
14 households with adolescents and older adults; and
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16 WHEREAS, rural health clinics help to address the
17 inadequate number of physicians available to serve Medicare
18 beneficiaries in rural areas and increase the availability of
19 medically necessary, face-to-face primary health services and
20 qualified preventative health services furnished by rural health
21 clinic practitioners, including physicians, nurse practitioners,
22 physical assistants, certified nurse-midwives, clinical
23 psychologists, and social workers; and
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25 WHEREAS, in rural, tight-knit communities where there is
26 little privacy, residents are dissuaded from seeking mental
27 health service for fear of community condemnation, prejudices,
28 or negative perceptions; and
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30 WHEREAS, rural health clinics serve an essential role in
31 underserved communities such as Ka‘u on Hawai‘i island,



1 enabling greater accessibility to behavioral health services for
2 Medicaid patients; now, therefore,

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4 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
5 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021, the
6 House of Representatives concurring, that the Hawaii Health
7 Systems Corporation is urged to expand the Ka'u Rural Health
8 Clinic to improve access to urgent care and outpatient
9 behavioral health services; and

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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
12 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Board of Directors
13 of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation.

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16 OFFERED BY: 

