

MAR 12 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY
EXAMINING THE EFFICACY OF THE HAWAII CARES PROGRAM OFFERED
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
ADMINISTRATION ADULT MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION.

1 WHEREAS, Oahu has about 4,448 homeless people, twenty-three
2 percent of whom report having mental health issues, and eighteen
3 percent of whom report having a substance use problem; and
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5 WHEREAS, many of those homeless people have encounters with
6 the police that result in arrest and incarceration when
7 experiencing a behavioral health crisis; and
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9 WHEREAS, calling the police to intervene when someone is
10 experiencing a behavioral health crisis can be deadly both for
11 law enforcement and community members; in the United States, at
12 least one in four people killed by the police has a serious
13 mental health problem; and
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15 WHEREAS, a mobile response team comprised of qualified
16 health care professionals would be much more effective than the
17 police in responding to homeless people in distress and others
18 with mental health and/or substance use disorders, and this new
19 approach could save the State millions in incarceration,
20 ambulance, and emergency room costs; and
21

22 WHEREAS, an example of a jurisdiction that has successfully
23 implemented mobile non-violent response teams is the Crisis
24 Assistance Helping out on the Streets (CAHOOTS) Program in
25 Eugene, Oregon, which in 2019, responded to twenty-nine thousand
26 calls, about twenty percent of the city's dispatches, of which
27 only one-half of one percent required police backup; and
28

29 WHEREAS, the CAHOOTS Program reports that it saves the city
30 of Eugene approximately \$22,500,000 in public safety, ambulance,
31 and emergency room costs every year; and
32

33 WHEREAS, currently, the Department of Health's Behavioral
34 Health Administration Adult Mental Health Division coordinates



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1 crisis services statewide, which comprise an array of options
2 that are accessible by contacting the Hawaii CARES Program,
3 including the State's twenty-four-hour a day, seven days a week
4 behavioral health call center; and

5
6 WHEREAS, when an individual contacts the Hawaii CARES
7 Program and indicates a need for community-based behavioral
8 health support, CARES staff assist the individual by linking
9 them to appropriate crisis services, including crisis mobile
10 outreach, mental health emergency workers, short-term
11 stabilization beds, and twenty-four-hour residential group home
12 placement with specialized programming; now, therefore,

13
14 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
15 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021,
16 that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to conduct a
17 study examining the efficacy of the Hawaii CARES Program offered
18 by the Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration
19 Adult Mental Health Division; and

20
21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include the
22 following:

- 23
- 24 (1) A summary of the responses and interventions made by
25 the Hawaii CARES Program during the past five years,
26 including intervention responses to incidents related
27 to mental health, substance abuse, suicide threats, as
28 well as providing conflict resolution and welfare
29 checks on the island of Oahu;
 - 30
31 (2) Whether any of the responses and interventions listed
32 in subparagraph (1) involved an armed response; and
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 - 34 (3) A financial report for the preceding five fiscal
35 years; and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in conducting the study, the
38 Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to seek input from the
39 Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Honolulu
40 Police Department, and Department of Budget and Finance; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Legislative
3 Reference Bureau, Director of Health, Director of Human
4 Services, Chief of Police of the Honolulu Police Department, and
5 Director of Finance.

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OFFERED BY: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joh', written over a horizontal line.