

JAN 21 2022

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that homelessness in
2 Hawaii is a long-term problem. The legislature acknowledges
3 that homelessness requires greater collaboration and
4 coordination among diverse government entities, businesses,
5 nonprofits, and faith-based organizations. Accordingly, the
6 legislature enacted Act 105, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012 (Act
7 105). Act 105, in part, formally established the Hawaii
8 interagency council on homelessness, which was temporarily
9 created through Executive Order No 11-21, and allowed the
10 council to continue identifying critical strategic goals and
11 initiatives that would mitigate homelessness while ensuring that
12 persons experiencing homelessness obtain permanent housing and
13 become reintegrated into the community. As one of its statutory
14 duties, the council adopted a ten-year plan on September 10,
15 2012. At that time, the point-in-time count or the annual one-
16 day unduplicated count of sheltered and unsheltered individuals
17 and families experiencing homelessness in the State totaled



1 7,921 statewide. Eight years later, in 2020, the point-in-time
2 count totaled 6,458.

3 While the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness has a
4 ten-year plan, the legislature further finds that the State
5 lacks a long-term commitment to reduce, prevent, and end
6 homelessness. Various state agencies and programs that address
7 homelessness have been built up on a piecemeal basis and have
8 approached homelessness in a similar manner. There is no
9 central agency tasked to find solutions to homelessness through
10 reduction and prevention by coordinating state and local
11 government agencies and private entities.

12 The legislature recognizes that year-to-year funding,
13 rather than consistent funding in the base budget, creates
14 uncertainty for the staff of a program to continue their duties
15 and responsibilities. For example, in 2019, the legislature
16 enacted Act 81, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, which appointed the
17 governor's coordinator on homelessness to administer and enforce
18 the duties and responsibilities of the council. The coordinator
19 is currently funded as a special project under the department of
20 human services, while the coordinator's full-time staff of five
21 are not permanent employees. In addition, year-to-year funding



1 among agencies and providers for homeless services threatens
2 already potentially sporadic and fragmented services, instead of
3 providing consistent support that will help permanently house
4 persons experiencing homelessness in the State.

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 6 (1) Establish the office on homelessness and housing
7 solutions; and
- 8 (2) Make an appropriation.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and
11 to read as follows:

12 "PART .

13 OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS

14 § -1 Definitions As used in this part, unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Coordinator" means the governor's coordinator on
17 homelessness as provided in section 346-381.5.

18 "Fund" means the homelessness and housing solutions special
19 fund.

20 "Office" means the office on homelessness and housing
21 solutions.



1 **§ -2 Office on homelessness and housing solutions;**
2 **establishment.** There is established within the department of
3 budget and finance, for administrative purposes only, an office
4 on homelessness and housing solutions that shall:

5 (1) Work with state, county, and community agencies to
6 develop solutions that prevent and end homelessness
7 through transitional and permanent housing and
8 supportive and/or assisted services; and

9 (2) Test innovative solutions to prevent and end
10 homelessness.

11 **§ -3 Administration.** (a) The office on homelessness
12 and housing solutions shall be headed by the governor's
13 coordinator on homelessness, appointed under section 346-381.5,
14 for the proper administration and enforcement of this part.

15 (b) The coordinator shall report directly to the governor
16 and appoint staff as may be necessary.

17 (c) The employees of the office shall be exempt from
18 chapter 76.

19 **§ -4 Duties and responsibilities.** The office shall:

20 (1) Identify and address system gaps by:



- 1 (A) Developing and implementing homelessness and
2 housing strategies, including but not limited to
3 exemptions for homeless shelters, mental health
4 and substance abuse treatment facilities, and
5 supportive housing projects;
- 6 (B) Developing a standard strategy for coordinated
7 entry, needs assessment, and allocation of
8 services and housing types to create pathways to
9 permanent assisted and independent housing;
- 10 (C) Working with state departments and agencies to
11 develop and maintain multi-year strategic and
12 tactical plans and road maps as a part of the
13 Hawaii interagency council on homelessness' ten-
14 year statewide plan;
- 15 (D) Coordinating matters relating to homelessness and
16 affordable housing between state and county
17 agencies and private entities; and
- 18 (E) Developing and testing innovative solutions to
19 homelessness through collaboration with
20 appropriate agencies;



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- 1 (2) Provide administrative support for the Hawaii
2 interagency council on homelessness to develop its
3 unified ten-year statewide plan to address
4 homelessness in all counties of the State; and
- 5 (3) Establish and maintain a statewide homelessness and
6 shelter and housing data clearinghouse, which may
7 include information on persons experiencing
8 homelessness, and available services, shelters, and
9 housing.

10 § -5 **Annual report.** The coordinator shall submit an
11 annual report to the legislature on the progress of its
12 activities, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
13 each regular session. The report shall also include:

- 14 (1) Performance metrics relating to reducing the numbers
15 on homelessness;
- 16 (2) Performance metrics relating to housing and services
17 inventory gaps, including but not limited to the
18 number of persons experiencing homelessness served and
19 placed into permanent housing and the cost per person
20 served;



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1 (3) Performance metrics to evaluate the State's
2 performance on homeless services, housing, care
3 coordination and other needed services to end
4 homelessness; and

5 (4) An inventory of available vacant land provided by
6 state agencies that administer public lands.

7 **§ -6 Homelessness and housing solutions special fund.**

8 (a) There is established in the state treasury the homelessness
9 and housing solutions special fund, into which shall be
10 deposited:

11 (1) Appropriations by the legislature to the fund; and

12 (2) Gifts, donations, and grants from public agencies and
13 private persons.

14 (b) All interest earned or accrued on moneys deposited in
15 the fund shall become part of the fund.

16 (c) Moneys in the fund shall be used for the following
17 purposes:

18 (1) Expand tested solutions aimed to end homelessness,
19 such as the homeless outreach and navigation for
20 unsheltered persons program, ohana zones, law



1 enforcement assisted diversion, and community outreach
2 courts;

3 (2) Provide financial assistance to public and private
4 agencies in accordance with chapter 42F involved in
5 homelessness and housing solutions other than those
6 covered by this section;

7 (3) Test, develop, and assess innovative housing
8 solutions; and

9 (4) Cover administrative and operational costs of the
10 office."

11 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general fund
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,000,000 or so much
13 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to be
14 deposited into the homelessness and housing solutions special
15 fund.

16 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the homelessness
17 and housing solutions special fund the sum of \$2,000,000 or so
18 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for
19 the administration of the office of homelessness and housing
20 solutions.



S.B. NO. 2370

Report Title:

Office of Homelessness and Housing Solutions; Homelessness and Housing Solutions Special Fund; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Office of Homelessness and Housing Solutions and the Homelessness and Housing Solutions Special Fund. Makes an appropriation.

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