

MAR 11 2022

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO EMPLOY THE TEAM 6B CONTACT TRACING TEAM AS PERMANENT STAFF AND HIRE OTHER MEMBERS FROM THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES IN AN EFFORT TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH INEQUITIES THAT EXIST AND CREATE BETTER ACCESS TO CULTURALLY RELEVANT PROGRAMS FOR NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS.

1 WHEREAS, the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
2 communities have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19
3 more than any other communities in the State by together making
4 up approximately twenty-one percent of the population but having
5 accounted for over fifty percent of the State's COVID-19 cases
6 in 2020, and approximately thirty percent in 2021 and 2022; and
7

8 WHEREAS, due to a lack of comprehensive plans by the State
9 for mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in the Native Hawaiian and
10 Pacific Islander communities, community leaders and
11 organizations mobilized by forming various task forces to meet
12 the immediate needs of families within their communities who
13 were most heavily affected; and
14

15 WHEREAS, as Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders share a
16 colonial past that has led to generational trauma and socio-
17 economic hardships, COVID-19 added to these inequities and
18 social injustices; and
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20 WHEREAS, in October 2020, the Department of Health created
21 a contact tracing investigation team known as Team 6B to provide
22 critical outreach to Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islander
23 communities; and
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25 WHEREAS, Team 6B was innovative and different as it
26 provided culturally appropriate engagement in the communities'
27 primary languages and at a level that had not been seen
28 previously; and
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1 WHEREAS, throughout the past two years, Team 6B has done a
2 tremendous amount of work in the community from creating
3 educational webinars that are in the communities' primary
4 languages and culturally appropriate, hosting testing and
5 vaccination pods that are inclusive of social support services
6 to assist with community participation, and provided much needed
7 data collection and disaggregation; and
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9 WHEREAS, the hiring of underserved and marginalized
10 community members by the Department of Health proved successful
11 and drastically decreased the number of cases in the Native
12 Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities and provided a level
13 of disaggregation that was not previously present; and
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15 WHEREAS, this body recognizes the importance of creating
16 culturally relevant programs and supports diverse hiring
17 practices to address the inequity that exists for many
18 underserved and marginalized communities; now, therefore,
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20 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
21 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,
22 that the Department of Health is urged to employ the Team 6B
23 contact tracing team as permanent staff and hire other members
24 from the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities that
25 have been responding to the pandemic since March 2020; and
26

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
28 urged to continue hiring members from the Native Hawaiian and
29 Pacific Islander communities in an effort to address the health
30 inequities that exist for these underserved communities and to
31 create better access to culturally relevant programs for Native
32 Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
35 requested to create a diverse hiring plan and to submit a report
36 of its progress to the Legislature no later than twenty days
37 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2023; and
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
40 Resolution be transmitted to Director of Health and the
41 Administrator of the State Health Planning and Development
42 Agency.



S.R. NO. 112

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OFFERED BY: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JBL', is written over a horizontal line that serves as a signature line.