

MAR 10 2022

SENATE 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
3

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 due to the
13 COVID-19 pandemic or geographic separation from other people may
14 present specific health risks for households with adolescents
15 and older adults; and
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17 WHEREAS, rural health clinics help to address the
18 inadequate number of physicians available to serve Medicare
19 beneficiaries in rural areas and increase the availability of
20 medically necessary, face-to-face primary health services and
21 qualified preventative health services furnished by rural health
22 clinic practitioners, including physicians, nurse practitioners,
23 physician assistants, certified nurse-midwives, clinical
24 psychologists, and social workers; and
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26 WHEREAS, in rural, tight-knit communities where there is
27 little privacy, residents are dissuaded from seeking mental
28 health service for fear of community condemnation, prejudices,
29 or negative perceptions; and
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31 WHEREAS, rural health clinics serve an essential role in
32 supporting underserved and isolated communities such as Ka'u on
33 Hawai'i island, enabling greater accessibility to behavioral
34 health services for Medicaid patients; now, therefore,
35



S.R. NO. 37

1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,
3 that the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation is urged to expand
4 the Ka'u Rural Health Clinic to improve access to urgent care and
5 outpatient behavioral health services; and

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
8 Resolution be transmitted to the President and Chief Executive
9 Officer of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation.

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OFFERED BY: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'DKM' followed by a long horizontal flourish.