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# 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 is one  
2 of the most pressing problems in Hawaii, which requires a  
3 robust, comprehensive, long-term solution to address the State's  
4 affordable housing and homelessness crisis. One important  
5 component of the solution is ensuring that low-income kupuna are  
6 not forced into homelessness through a combination of fixed  
7 incomes and rapidly rising rents. Therefore, a rent subsidy  
8 program targeted toward assisting kupuna in this situation is  
9 necessary.

10           The legislature further finds that, over the last fifty  
11 years, the number of cost-burdened renters, or those paying more  
12 than thirty per cent of their income for rent, has significantly  
13 increased. Today, almost half of all renters in the State pay  
14 more than thirty per cent of their income for rent. High  
15 housing costs have driven more and more Hawaii residents into  
16 homelessness. Hawaii currently has the highest homelessness  
17 rate in the nation.



1           The legislature additionally finds that by making smart  
2 investments in homelessness and housing, using data-driven  
3 practices, and improving coordination, Hawaii has gradually  
4 begun to turn the tide in the homelessness crisis. In 2017,  
5 Hawaii's homelessness rate went down for the first time in  
6 years, a trend that continued in 2018. During the regular  
7 session of 2018, the legislature made unprecedented levels of  
8 investment in low-income housing and homelessness, appropriating  
9 \$200,000,000 for the rental housing revolving fund, \$30,000,000  
10 for ohana zones, and \$13,500,000 for proven-effective and  
11 promising homelessness programs.

12           The legislature also finds that, to turn back fifty years  
13 of growth in Hawaii's housing and homelessness crisis,  
14 investments of this scale must be made consistently in the  
15 coming years. Hawaii must prioritize programs that are the most  
16 cost-effective and target the most vulnerable populations, such  
17 as the State's kupuna. The 2017 Homeless Service Utilization  
18 Report found that there are 1,386 homeless elders in the State.  
19 Many more elders face homelessness as rents skyrocket. Due to  
20 the fixed incomes of elders, a long-term rental assistance  
21 program is needed.



1           The purpose of this Act is to establish the long-term  
2 rental assistance pilot program for kupuna.

3           SECTION 2. (a) There is established the long-term rental  
4 assistance pilot program for kupuna to be administered by the  
5 Hawaii public housing authority. The Hawaii public housing  
6 authority may enter into memoranda of agreement with the  
7 counties or specialized non-profit organizations as necessary to  
8 implement this Act.

9           (b) The Hawaii public housing authority shall:

- 10           (1) Provide long-term rental assistance to individuals who  
11           are sixty-two years of age or older and are homeless  
12           or at imminent risk of becoming homeless;
- 13           (2) Ensure that individuals participating in the program  
14           will not pay more than fifty per cent of their net  
15           income for rent;
- 16           (3) Provide housing counseling and landlord assistance to  
17           assist kupuna in obtaining or retaining permanent  
18           housing; and
- 19           (4) Coordinate with mental health services to assist  
20           kupuna in obtaining or retaining permanent housing.



1 (c) The Hawaii public housing authority shall be exempt  
2 from chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, in selecting a  
3 qualified non-profit organization to administer the long-term  
4 rental assistance pilot program for kupuna, and shall, without  
5 regard to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, establish rules  
6 and qualification standards for participants of the pilot  
7 program.

8 (d) The Hawaii public housing authority may require long-  
9 term rental assistance pilot program for kupuna participants to  
10 participate in the Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System  
11 for homeless services.

12 (e) The Hawaii public housing authority shall submit a  
13 report of its findings and recommendations, including any  
14 proposed legislation, regarding the long-term rental assistance  
15 pilot program for kupuna to the legislature no later than one  
16 month prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2023,  
17 2024, 2025, and 2026.

18 (f) The long-term rental assistance pilot program shall  
19 terminate on June 30, 2025.

20 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so



1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for  
2 the long-term rental assistance pilot program, including two  
3 temporary full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) public housing  
4 specialist positions within the Hawaii public housing authority.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii public  
6 housing authority for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.

8



**Report Title:**

Kupuna Caucus; Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program for  
Kupuna; Hawaii Public Housing Authority; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the long-term rental assistance pilot program for  
kupuna to be administered by the Hawaii public housing authority  
for individuals who are sixty-two years of age or older and are  
homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Appropriates  
funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is  
not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

