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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CHILD WELFARE SERVICES.

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

1           SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to:

2           (1) Expand the investigative powers of the department of

3           human services to include review and investigation of

4           families that receive benefits from the State's

5           adoption assistance program and against whom a

6           complaint has been lodged;

7           (2) Appropriate funds to hire additional case workers and

8           support staff; and

9           (3) Appropriate funds to increase compensation to fill

10          vacancies and retain employees in existing child

11          welfare services branch case worker positions;

12          provided that any increase in compensation shall be

13          subject to collective bargaining with the objective of

14          expeditiously filling all vacancies.

15          SECTION 2. Section 346-301, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is

16          amended to read as follows:



1            "[+]§346-301[-] Adoption assistance program  
2      established[-]; review or investigation of program benefit  
3      recipients. The department of human services shall maintain an  
4      adoption assistance program to facilitate the adoption of  
5      children with special needs. Pursuant to section 346- ,  
6      families receiving benefits from the adoption assistance program  
7      and against whom a complaint has been lodged with the department  
8      of human services shall be subject to review or investigation at  
9      any time and in a manner, place, and form as may be prescribed  
10     by the department or its authorized agents in accordance with  
11     chapters 350 and 587A."

12            SECTION 3. The department of human services shall collect  
13      and analyze data to determine the impact of expanding home  
14      visits to families receiving benefits from the adoption  
15      assistance program and shall submit a report of its findings and  
16      recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
17      legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
18      the regular session of 2027.

19            SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
20      revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                      or so  
21      much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for



1 the hiring of case workers and support  
2 staff positions to provide annual or semi-annual in-home visits  
3 for families receiving benefits from the State's adoption  
4 assistance program.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
6 human services for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general  
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
9 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to  
10 increase compensation to fill vacancies and retain employees in  
11 existing child welfare services branch case worker positions;  
12 provided that any increase in compensation shall be subject to  
13 collective bargaining with the objective of expeditiously  
14 filling all vacancies.

15 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
16 human services for the purposes of this Act.

17 SECTION 6. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
18 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

19 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2060.



**Report Title:**

Foster Care; Adoption; Adoption Assistance; Investigation;  
Department of Human Services; Appropriation

**Description:**

Expands the investigative powers of the Department of Human Services to families that receive benefits from the State's Adoption Assistance Program, against whom a complaint has been lodged. Requires the Department of Human Services to report on the impact of expanding home visits to families receiving benefits from the adoption assistance program to the Legislature before the convening of the Regular Session of 2027. Appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to hire additional case workers and support staff. Appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to increase, subject to collective bargaining, compensation to fill vacancies and retain employees in existing Child Welfare Services Branch positions. Effective 7/1/2060. (SD1)

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