



GOV. MSG. NO. 1355

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

July 7, 2023

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate,  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on July 7, 2023, the following bill was signed into law:

SB900 SD2 HD2 CD1

RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE HEALTH  
INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.  
**ACT 252**

Sincerely,

Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

on \_\_\_\_\_

THE SENATE  
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023  
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 900  
S.D. 2  
H.D. 2  
C.D. 1

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of  
2 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37 91 and 37 93,  
3 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the  
4 appropriations contained in H.B. No. 300, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, C.D.  
5 1, and this Act will cause the state general fund expenditure  
6 ceiling for fiscal year 2023 2024 to be exceeded by  
7 \$1,063,953,655 or 11.0 per cent. This current declaration takes  
8 into account general fund appropriations authorized for fiscal  
9 year 2023 2024 in H.B. No. 300, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, C.D. 1, and this  
10 Act only. The reasons for exceeding the general fund  
11 expenditure ceiling are that:

- 12 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to  
13 serve the public interest; and
- 14 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs  
15 addressed by this Act.

16 SECTION 2. The legislature finds that medicare is  
17 essential to providing health care coverage for older adults and



1 persons with disabilities in the State. However, the rules and  
2 procedures for medicare eligibility and enrollment are complex  
3 and difficult to navigate, especially for kupuna. The  
4 legislature further finds that Hawaii's medicare population has  
5 increased one hundred twenty per cent over the span of thirty  
6 years, from 133,439 persons in 1992 to 295,405 persons in 2022.

7 According to World Population Review, an independent  
8 organization without political affiliations, Hawaii ranks first  
9 in the nation in terms of longevity, with residents living 81.3  
10 years on average, and the cost of living in Hawaii is almost  
11 double that of the national average, at 193.3 per cent. In  
12 2022, total medical and prescription drug spending rose to  
13 \$157,480,248. According to a Financial Health Network and  
14 Hawaii Community Foundation report, seventy-three per cent of  
15 medicare beneficiaries report dipping into savings and forty-  
16 seven per cent report relying on family and friends for  
17 financial support. Approximately four per cent of the State is  
18 uninsured, and about eleven per cent live in poverty. Without  
19 insurance, unexpected medical costs or a catastrophic illness  
20 could result in the loss of one's home and assets. A lack of  
21 health care coverage lowers health outcomes and increases health



1 care costs, poverty rates, and the number of individuals who  
2 qualify for the already overburdened medicaid program.

3 The legislature further finds that the Hawaii state health  
4 insurance assistance program was established within the  
5 executive office on aging in 1992 with two temporary staff  
6 members. The program's purpose is to assist and educate  
7 medicare beneficiaries to:

- 8 (1) Make informed health insurance choices based on the  
9 beneficiary's needs and budget;
- 10 (2) Enroll in medicare as soon as first eligible to avoid  
11 lifetime late enrollment penalties;
- 12 (3) Access wellness and preventive services to improve  
13 health outcomes, lower health care costs, and promote  
14 aging in place; and
- 15 (4) Enroll in low-income subsidy programs, including  
16 medicaid, to reduce out-of-pocket costs.

17 The Hawaii state health insurance assistance program  
18 collaborates with county agencies on aging to conduct statewide  
19 outreach at health fairs, enrollment events, senior centers, and  
20 community organizations and through presentations to employers  
21 to promote the program's free, local, unbiased, and confidential



1 services. Hawaii's state health insurance assistance program  
2 currently serves over eight thousand eight hundred individuals,  
3 approximately three per cent of Hawaii's medicare population.  
4 The Administration for Community Living, a division of the  
5 federal Department of Health and Human Services, considers eight  
6 per cent of the medicare population, or 23,191 individuals, as  
7 acceptable performance and justification for continued funding.  
8 Additional staffing resources are needed to meet this annual  
9 goal by fiscal year 2025.

10 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 11 (1) Require the executive office on aging to submit annual  
12 progress reports to the legislature on the Hawaii  
13 state health insurance assistance program; and  
14 (2) Appropriate funds for the Hawaii state health  
15 insurance assistance program to establish program  
16 specialist positions within the executive office on  
17 aging to meet the growing aging population's  
18 increasing demand for accurate, timely, and reliable  
19 services.



1 SECTION 3. Chapter 349, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§349- The Hawaii state health insurance assistance  
5 program; annual report. The executive office on aging shall  
6 submit to the legislature a progress report on the Hawaii state  
7 health insurance assistance program no later than twenty days  
8 prior to the convening of each regular session. The report  
9 shall include but not be limited to:

- 10 (1) The number of persons in the State's medicare  
11 population served by outreach programs;  
12 (2) The number of previously uninsured persons who  
13 received assistance with enrollment in medical or  
14 prescription drug coverage; and  
15 (3) The number of persons assisted by the Hawaii state  
16 health insurance assistance program with enrollment in  
17 low-income subsidy programs."

18 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$186,288 or so much  
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 for the  
21 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) program



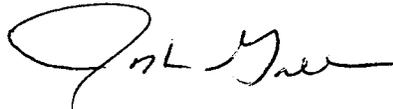
1 specialist III position, one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
2 program specialist IV position, and one full-time equivalent  
3 (1.0 FTE) program specialist V position within the executive  
4 office on aging for the Hawaii state health insurance assistance  
5 program.

6 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the executive  
7 office on aging for the purposes of this Act.

8 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

APPROVED this 7th day of July, 2023



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII



**THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI'I**

Date: May 4, 2023  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2023.

  
President of the Senate

  
Clerk of the Senate

SB No. 900, SD 2, HD 2, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: May 4, 2023  
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2023.



Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker  
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita  
Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives