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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that suicide accounts for  
2 twenty-five per cent of all fatal injuries in the State. The  
3 legislature also finds that in 2019, suicide was the leading  
4 cause of death for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders  
5 between the ages of fifteen to twenty-four. That same year,  
6 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders were three times less  
7 likely to receive mental health services or prescription  
8 medications for mental health treatment, compared to  
9 non-Hispanic whites.

10           Suicide attempts, like suicide deaths, have harmful,  
11 lasting, and profound impacts on families and communities. For  
12 every person who dies by suicide, more than thirty others will  
13 attempt to take their own lives. Thus, it is important to  
14 continue the coordinated approach to preventing suicide and  
15 suicide attempts spearheaded by the prevent suicide Hawaii task  
16 force. Amending the duties of the task force to focus on Native  
17 Hawaiian and Pacific Islander suicide prevention efforts is an



1 important step toward addressing mental health needs amongst  
2 vulnerable Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities that  
3 already experience higher rates of poverty and incarceration in  
4 relation to other groups in the State.

5 The purpose of this Act is to codify the prevent suicide  
6 Hawaii task force.

7 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
8 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
9 and to read as follows:

10 "§321- Prevent suicide Hawaii task force; established.

11 (a) There is established the prevent suicide Hawaii task force  
12 to be placed within the department of health for administrative  
13 purposes. The prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall examine,  
14 evaluate, and determine methods to improve education, awareness,  
15 support services, and outreach to best prevent suicides in  
16 Hawaii, particularly among Native Hawaiians and Pacific  
17 Islanders. The prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall also  
18 monitor and implement the strategic plan formulated pursuant to  
19 House Concurrent Resolution No. 66, Senate Draft 1, Regular  
20 Session of 2016.



1        (b) The prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall consist of  
2 at least the following members:

3        (1) The current chair of the prevent suicide Hawaii task  
4 force, who shall continue to serve as chair of the  
5 task force until a successor is elected;

6        (2) One member to be appointed by the Substance Abuse and  
7 Mental Health Services Administration of the United  
8 States Department of Health and Human Services;

9        (3) One representative from the department of health  
10 behavioral health administration, to be appointed by  
11 the director of health;

12        (4) The suicide prevention coordinator from the department  
13 of health's emergency medical services and injury  
14 prevention system branch, to be appointed by the  
15 director of health;

16        (5) One member from the department of education, to be  
17 appointed by the superintendent of education;

18        (6) One member from the department of human services, to  
19 be appointed by the director of human services;

20        (7) One member from the department of public safety, or  
21 its successor agency, to be appointed by the director



1 of public safety or the director of the successor  
2 agency;

3 (8) One member to be appointed by the dean of the  
4 University of Hawaii, John A. Burns school of  
5 medicine, from its department of psychiatry;

6 (9) One member from the judiciary, to be appointed by the  
7 chief justice;

8 (10) One at-large member from each county, to be appointed  
9 by the governor;

10 (11) One member to be appointed by the president of the  
11 senate;

12 (12) One member to be appointed by the speaker of the house  
13 of representatives;

14 (13) Two members from a youth leadership suicide prevention  
15 organization, to be appointed by the president of the  
16 senate and the speaker of the house of representatives  
17 respectively; and

18 (14) One member from a Native Hawaiian health and well-  
19 being organization, to be appointed by the governor.

20 The members of the task force shall select the chairperson  
21 of the task force.



1        (c) In addition to the members listed in subsection (b),  
2 the chair of the prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall invite  
3 the following individuals to participate:

4        (1) The suicide prevention program manager for the United  
5 States Army Reserves in Hawaii;

6        (2) One member from each branch of the military;

7        (3) Two members from a suicide prevention organization;

8        and

9        (4) One member from a mental health advocacy organization.

10       (d) Notwithstanding section 26-34, any vacancies in the  
11 prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall be filled in the manner  
12 provided for under subsection (b), or be filled by the chair of  
13 the task force if there is no appointment mechanism for the  
14 vacancy or if the vacancy remains for more than six months;  
15 provided that all appointees shall have expertise or experience  
16 in fields or disciplines related to suicide prevention and  
17 education or awareness of suicide prevention.

18       (e) The prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall meet no  
19 less than once per quarter; provided that the task force may  
20 hold additional public meetings as it deems necessary. The  
21 chair, at the request of the majority of members, may request



1 special meetings. A majority of the prevent suicide Hawaii task  
2 force shall constitute a quorum to do business.

3 (f) Members of the prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall  
4 serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for  
5 reasonable expenses necessary for the performance of their  
6 duties, including travel expenses.

7 (g) Commencing with the regular session of \_\_\_\_\_, the  
8 prevent suicide Hawaii task force shall submit an annual report  
9 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the  
10 convening of each regular session. The annual report shall  
11 include updates on the implementation of the strategic plan,  
12 results obtained, and any other pertinent findings and  
13 recommendations of the prevent suicide Hawaii task force,  
14 including proposed legislation."

15 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on June 30, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force; Native Hawaiians; Pacific Islanders

**Description:**

Makes permanent the prevent suicide Hawaii task force within the department of health. Requires the task force to focus on reducing the suicide rate among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the State. Requires reports to the legislature. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD2)

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

