
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO STUDY PROVIDING CERTAIN HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR ALL CHILDREN AND PREGNANT PERSONS WHO WOULD OTHERWISE QUALIFY FOR COVERAGE IF NOT FOR THEIR IMMIGRATION STATUS.

1 WHEREAS, it is in the public interest that all pregnant
2 persons and children receive high quality health care that is
3 accessible, affordable, and equitable; and
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5 WHEREAS, limitation of access to health care based solely
6 on immigration status results in many immigrants and their
7 families being unable to obtain affordable health care coverage
8 through Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program
9 (CHIP), and health insurance exchanges established under part II
10 of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
11 (PPACA); and
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13 WHEREAS, low-income immigrants without prenatal care are
14 seven times more likely to give birth prematurely and five times
15 more likely to experience neonatal death; and
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17 WHEREAS, the average cost of medical care for health
18 problems resulting from premature birth is \$79,000, compared to
19 \$1,000 for a healthy birth; and
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21 WHEREAS, the cost of hospitalizations during a severely
22 premature newborn's first year of life can exceed \$500,000, and
23 the cost of intensive care can exceed \$1,000,000; and
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25 WHEREAS, lack of prenatal care results in health care costs
26 being passed on to taxpayers; and
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28 WHEREAS, low-income immigrant children without access to
29 health insurance face persistent inequities in the prevention,
30 diagnosis, and treatment of health conditions, including routine
31 health problems and those commonly addressed with necessary



1 specialty care and mental health, substance abuse, and oral
2 health services; and

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4 WHEREAS, children with special needs, including
5 difficulties with hearing, vision, mobility, self-care,
6 cognitive function, and work limitations may qualify for
7 Medicaid through various disability related pathways; and

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9 WHEREAS, a 2021 study published in *Academic Pediatrics*
10 found that for each dollar spent on children through Medicaid,
11 the government saved \$4 on future costs, including
12 hospitalizations and emergency visits, and when the benefits to
13 children themselves are included, each dollar spent on Medicaid
14 coverage generates at least \$12.66; and

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16 WHEREAS, state and federal laws deny access to Medicaid,
17 CHIP, and health insurance exchanges established under part II
18 of PPACA to all Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)
19 recipients; undocumented persons; and applicants without work
20 authorization attached to the applicant's request for registry,
21 order of supervision, cancellation of removal or suspension of
22 deportation, legalization under the Immigration Reform and
23 Control Act, legalization under the Legal Immigration Family
24 Equity Act, and asylum, except asylee children under fourteen
25 years old; and

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27 WHEREAS, the State is home to an estimated 41,246
28 undocumented persons; and

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30 WHEREAS, the State's undocumented and DACA-eligible
31 residents were born in the Philippines (54.6 percent); Japan
32 (9.3 percent); China (8.8 percent); Korea (6.2 percent); Mexico
33 (4.6 percent); and Europe, Canada, and other countries (16.5
34 percent) and paid an estimated \$66,000,000 in federal income
35 taxes and nearly \$45,000,000 in state and local taxes in 2018;
36 and

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38 WHEREAS, approximately eleven thousand of the State's
39 undocumented persons are uninsured, and many who are insured
40 receive individual and family health insurance through the
41 Prepaid Health Care Act; and



1 WHEREAS, twenty-five states provide or will soon provide
2 health care coverage for prenatal care for all persons,
3 regardless of immigration status, and eleven states provide or
4 will soon provide CHIP benefits or coverage similar to Medicaid
5 to all children, regardless of immigration status; now,
6 therefore,
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8 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
9 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
10 Session of 2023, that the Department of Human Services is
11 requested to study providing Medicaid, the Children's Health
12 Insurance Program, or similar health insurance coverage for all
13 children and pregnant persons who would otherwise qualify for
14 coverage under these programs if not for their immigration
15 status; and
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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include the health
18 care opportunities, resources, and costs relating to providing
19 the described coverages; and
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
22 Services is requested to engage applicable stakeholders in the
23 study, including immigrant health care providers, social service
24 providers, and advocacy groups; and
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
27 Services is requested to submit a report regarding the findings
28 of the study, including any proposed legislation, to the
29 Legislature no later than December 15, 2023; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
32 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Attorney General,
33 Director of Human Services, and President of the Inter-Agency
34 Council for Immigrant and Refugee Services.

