
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SOCIAL WORK.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State is facing
2 a shortage of social workers to help individuals in the State
3 manage their mental health and cope with stressors in their
4 everyday lives. This shortage is concerning since social
5 workers already have full caseloads and may be unable to provide
6 additional services, which may in turn intensify the need for
7 help and increase burnout among social workers. The demand for
8 social workers will likely continue to rise, especially during
9 the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic and its aftermath, because
10 individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, life transitions,
11 and other mental health challenges will need social workers'
12 support to address difficult or stressful life situations.

13 The legislature further finds that some nonviolent
14 incarcerated individuals may have experienced the need for
15 social services or may have firsthand experience receiving
16 services from social workers. These individuals may be uniquely
17 qualified to enter the field of social work as assistants after



1 undergoing training. The legislature also finds that to address
2 the shortage of social workers and lack of social services in
3 the State, providing social work training to nonviolent
4 incarcerated individuals may help these individuals reintegrate
5 into society once their period of incarceration is over.

6 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 7 (1) Require the department of public safety, in
8 collaboration with the department of human services,
9 to develop and establish a social work training
10 program to assist nonviolent incarcerated individuals
11 in exploring a professional pathway in the practice of
12 social work and becoming eligible to work as
13 assistants to licensed social workers; and
14 (2) Appropriate funds.

15 SECTION 2. Chapter 353H, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
17 and to read as follows:

18 **"§353H- Incarcerated individuals; social work training**
19 **program; established.** (a) The department shall develop and
20 establish a social work training program, in collaboration with
21 the department of human services, to assist nonviolent



1 incarcerated individuals in exploring a professional pathway in
2 the practice of social work and becoming eligible for employment
3 as assistants to licensed social workers.

4 (b) The department may coordinate with accredited
5 institutions of higher education, private entities, and
6 nonprofit organizations to provide training in social work to
7 participating individuals.

8 (c) The department shall establish rules pursuant to
9 chapter 91 to implement this section."

10 SECTION 3. The department of public safety and department
11 of human services shall jointly submit a report of the
12 departments' progress in developing and establishing the social
13 work training program pursuant to section 2 of this Act, along
14 with findings, recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to
15 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening
16 of the regular sessions of 2024 and 2025.

17 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
20 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
21 year 2024-2025 to develop and establish a social work training



1 program to assist certain nonviolent incarcerated individuals in
2 the area of social work pursuant to this Act.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
4 of public safety for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

6 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on June 30, 3000.

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H.B. NO. 467 H.D. 1

Report Title:

DPS; DHS; Social Work; Training Program; Nonviolent Incarcerated Individuals; Reports; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the department of public safety, in collaboration with the department of human services, to develop and establish a social work training program to assist nonviolent incarcerated individuals in the area of social work. Requires progress reports on the program to the legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

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