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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ORAL HEALTH.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's dental  
2 public health program is not meeting the needs of residents.  
3 Unlike forty-two other states, the State's department of health  
4 currently does not have dedicated public dental health staff to  
5 assess and monitor the population's oral health status,  
6 community needs, and assets; inform and educate people about  
7 oral health; mobilize community partners to leverage resources;  
8 develop, champion, and implement policies, laws, and plans that  
9 support oral health efforts; reduce barriers to care; assure a  
10 competent and skilled public and private oral health workforce;  
11 and improve public dental health functions through ongoing  
12 evaluation and continuous quality improvement.

13           The legislature further finds that the adult medicaid  
14 population has limited access to dental care. While there are  
15 over 288,000 adults with medicaid dental benefits, there is a  
16 lack of dental providers of needed services for the population.  
17 Additionally, while federally qualified health centers in each



1 county are a critical medical and oral health safety net, in  
2 2021, about 42,000 people of all ages and all types of health  
3 insurance were served by the health centers.

4 The legislature additionally finds that while the  
5 department of health operates five small dental clinics and  
6 serves individuals who are elderly, blind, intellectually  
7 disabled, developmentally disabled, and mentally ill at the  
8 Hawaii state hospital, all clinics are located in the city and  
9 county of Honolulu. The State does not operate dental clinics  
10 to serve similar populations on the neighbor islands. The  
11 legislature notes that 339 dentists currently accept and treat  
12 adults on medicaid.

13 While the legislature allocated over \$25,000,000 in 2022 to  
14 reinstate adult medicaid dental benefits, the legislature is  
15 concerned that the current oral health infrastructure is  
16 insufficient to deliver oral health services to those most in  
17 need.

18 The purpose of this Act is to establish an oral health task  
19 force to review information on the status of oral health in the  
20 State and make recommendations to improve oral health  
21 infrastructure in Hawaii.



1 SECTION 2. (a) There is established an oral health task  
2 force to be placed within the department of health for  
3 administrative purposes.

4 (b) The oral health task force shall:

5 (1) Review all existing information and data relating to  
6 oral health status in Hawaii, including the Hawaii  
7 Oral Health Coalition 2022-2023 environmental scan,  
8 for evidence of key oral health issues and evident  
9 areas for action;

10 (2) Review all existing information and data relating to  
11 the department of health public dental health  
12 functions and program processes and make  
13 recommendations regarding organizational structure,  
14 personnel needs, contracted service needs, required  
15 resources, and potential additional funding and  
16 support;

17 (3) Review and analyze systemic issues in oral health  
18 services and processes statewide and make  
19 recommendations on systemic changes and improvements  
20 to improve equity in oral health;



- 1 (4) Develop an oral health strategic blueprint that  
2 includes goals, objectives, specific actions, and  
3 resources needed;
- 4 (5) Act as a systemic facilitator for key oral health  
5 stakeholders so that complex and problematic issues  
6 can be discussed and addressed in a timely and  
7 effective manner;
- 8 (6) Ensure that there are agreed-upon community metrics  
9 for analyzing the development and implementation of  
10 medicaid funding for oral health; and
- 11 (7) Make recommendations to state and county policymakers  
12 regarding systemic actions recommended to improve oral  
13 health in Hawaii.
- 14 (c) The oral health task force shall consist of the  
15 following members:
- 16 (1) One representative of the family health services  
17 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
18 by the director of health;
- 19 (2) One representative of the developmental disabilities  
20 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
21 by the director of health;



- 1 (3) One representative of the medquest division of the  
2 department of human services, to be appointed by the  
3 director of human services;
- 4 (4) One representative of the student services branch of  
5 the department of education, to be appointed by the  
6 superintendent of education;
- 7 (5) One representative of the Hawaii Oral Health  
8 Coalition, to be appointed by the president of the  
9 senate;
- 10 (6) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Association,  
11 to be appointed by the speaker of the house of  
12 representatives;
- 13 (7) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Services, to  
14 be appointed by the president of the senate;
- 15 (8) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Services  
16 Foundation, to be appointed by the speaker of the  
17 house of representatives;
- 18 (9) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Medicaid  
19 Insurer, to be appointed by the president of the  
20 senate;



- 1       (10) A community advocate for medicaid and oral health, to  
2           be appointed by the speaker of the house of  
3           representatives;
- 4       (11) A community advocate for medicaid and oral health, to  
5           be appointed by the president of the senate;
- 6       (12) One representative of the Hawaii State Council on  
7           Developmental Disabilities, to be appointed by the  
8           speaker of the house of representatives;
- 9       (13) One representative of the Hawaii Primary Care  
10           Association, to be appointed by the president of the  
11           senate;
- 12       (14) One representative of the Native Hawaiian Health Care  
13           Systems, to be appointed by the speaker of the house  
14           of representatives;
- 15       (15) One representative of Papa Ola Lokahi, to be appointed  
16           by the president of the senate;
- 17       (16) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Hygienists'  
18           Association, to be appointed by the speaker of the  
19           house of representatives;
- 20       (17) One representative of the county of Hawaii, who is a  
21           department of health employee or community oral health



1 representative, to be appointed by the president of  
2 the senate;

3 (18) One representative of the county of Maui, to be  
4 appointed by the speaker of the house of  
5 representatives;

6 (19) One representative of the county of Kauai, to be  
7 appointed by the president of the senate;

8 (20) A faculty member of the University of Hawaii at Manoa  
9 Nancy Atmospera-Walch school of nursing dental hygiene  
10 program, to be appointed by the speaker of the house  
11 of representatives; and

12 (21) One representative of the University of Hawaii John A.  
13 Burns school of medicine, to be appointed by the  
14 president of the senate.

15 (d) The representative of the family health services  
16 division of the department of health shall serve as the  
17 chairperson of the task force. If the representative of the  
18 family health services division of the department of health is  
19 unable to serve as the chairperson of the task force, the  
20 members of the task force shall select a chairperson from among  
21 the remaining members.



1 (e) The oral health task force shall submit an interim  
2 report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature no  
3 later than December 1, 2023. The oral health task force shall  
4 submit a final report of its findings and recommendations,  
5 including any proposed legislation, no later than December 1,  
6 2024.

7 (f) The task force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2025.

8 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
10 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
11 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
12 year 2024-2025 for the family health services division of the  
13 department of health to administer a contract to hire a  
14 consultant to facilitate the work of the oral health task force,  
15 including completing the task force's interim and final reports.

16 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
17 of health for the purposes of this Act.

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



1 year 2024-2025 for the family health services division of the  
2 department of health to hire one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
3 program specialist IV and one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
4 program specialist V to oversee the contract to hire a  
5 consultant to facilitate the work of the oral health task force  
6 and to lay the foundation for a robust public dental health  
7 program in the State.

8 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
9 of health for the purposes of this Act.

10 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;  
11 provided that sections 3 and 4 shall take effect on July 1,  
12 2023.

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INTRODUCED BY: *Nadine K. Proctor*  
JAN 20 2023



# H.B. NO. 617

**Report Title:**

Oral Health; Public Dental Health; Task Force; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes an oral health task force to review the status of oral health in the State and make recommendations to improve oral health infrastructure in Hawaii. Appropriates funds.

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

