
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FALL PREVENTION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that fall-related
2 injuries disproportionately affect the elderly. Statistics show
3 that seniors over age sixty-five years are the most likely to
4 experience falling. Fall-related injuries and fatalities among
5 seniors aged sixty-five years and older in the State are
6 reaching troubling numbers. Every year in the State an average
7 of 144 seniors die; 2,184 are hospitalized; and 9,677 are
8 treated in emergency departments because of unintentional falls.
9 Almost every hour, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week a
10 senior is transported by an ambulance to an emergency room
11 because of a fall-related injury.

12 Injuries from falling create an incalculable emotional and
13 physical impact on seniors and their caregivers, and a
14 significant financial toll on families and the health care
15 system. Over \$223,000,000 in hospital and physician charges
16 were incurred in 2021 for fall-related injuries in the State.



1 The legislature finds, however, that falls are not an
2 inevitable part of aging and are preventable. Some health
3 initiatives that can help identify seniors that are at an
4 increased risk of falling include simple balance screening,
5 medication reviews, and vision exams. A variety of evidence-
6 based best practices also can help seniors prevent falls, such
7 as the practice of tai chi. Research and multiple double-blind
8 studies have proven that the practice of tai chi improves
9 balance and creates an overall feeling of well-being. Tai Chi
10 for Arthritis and Fall Prevention Classes are also an evidence-
11 based program supported and sponsored by the Centers for Disease
12 Control and Prevention and the National Council on Aging. The
13 department of health offers certified tai chi classes and has
14 expanded these classes to over thirty locations and all YMCAs
15 statewide.

16 The legislature further finds that the department of health
17 has operated a senior fall prevention campaign over the past
18 eighteen years and, despite severe cuts to its operating budget
19 over the last nine years, this campaign has continued to operate
20 and reduce falls. The legislature notes that when the senior
21 fall prevention campaign was fully funded, the Centers for



1 Disease Control and Prevention reported that the State had the
2 lowest fall and injury rate in the nation.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
4 funds to support the department of health's senior fall
5 prevention campaign.

6 SECTION 2. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
7 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
8 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
9 appropriations contained in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023,
10 and this Act will cause the state general fund expenditure
11 ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
12 \$ _____ or _____ per cent. This current declaration takes
13 into account general fund appropriations authorized for fiscal
14 year 2024-2025 in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023, and this Act
15 only. The reasons for exceeding the general fund expenditure
16 ceiling are that:

- 17 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to
18 serve the public interest; and
19 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs
20 addressed by this Act.



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for
4 the department of health's senior fall prevention campaign.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
6 health for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.



Report Title:

DOH; Kupuna Caucus; Senior Fall Prevention Campaign; Expenditure Ceiling; Appropriation

Description:

Makes an appropriation to support the Department of Health's Senior Fall Prevention Campaign. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. (SD1)

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