

'JAN 24 2024

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that research on health  
2 and safety reveals that mental illness is one of the most  
3 pressing challenges humanity is facing today. The prevalence of  
4 both acute and chronic mental illnesses has been on the rise in  
5 the State and globally over the past two decades. Untreated  
6 mental illness is one of the top predictors of suicide,  
7 substance abuse, incarceration, and adult disability. This is  
8 especially concerning for historically marginalized and under-  
9 resourced communities, which are at significantly higher risk of  
10 mental illness and also have more limited access to mental  
11 health education, resources, and support. Mental illness at the  
12 individual level compounds across communities and leads to  
13 negative statewide outcomes, including increased joblessness,  
14 homelessness, domestic violence, violent crime, and school  
15 dropout rates.

16           The legislature further finds that research conducted over  
17 the past fifty years in the fields of psychology, public health,



1 neuroscience, and organizational development demonstrate the  
2 critical importance of a tiered approach to comprehensively  
3 address statewide mental health concerns and provide every  
4 individual with the skills and resources they need to take care  
5 of themselves, their families, and their broader ecosystems.  
6 Tier 1 mental health support systems provide skills training,  
7 curricula, and programming to all stakeholders of an  
8 organization such as schools, community centers, police and fire  
9 departments, medical institutions, and other first responder  
10 facilities. Tier 1 systems provide a common vocabulary and set  
11 of wellness practices that members of the organization  
12 collectively share to promote a safe and healthy organizational  
13 culture for everyone. Tier 2 mental health support systems  
14 recognize that certain populations within an organization may be  
15 at higher risk for certain mental illnesses than others, and so  
16 these groups require specialized training, support, and skill-  
17 building that is culturally contextualized to best support the  
18 specific needs of the high-risk group. Tier 2 systems therefore  
19 exist to provide additional specialized group support  
20 interventions. Taken together, these tiers of support cover the



1 core mental health needs of individuals, groups, organizations,  
2 and communities.

3 The legislature further finds that a comprehensive mental  
4 health support system on a statewide level requires the seamless  
5 integration of tier 1 and 2 support services. Tier 1 systems  
6 benefit public institutions through whole-organization tier 1  
7 training for students, school staff, firefighters, police  
8 officers, medical staff, and other first responder groups.  
9 Higher risk groups within each of these organizations benefit  
10 from tier 2 approaches through culturally-responsive support  
11 systems. Overall, mentally well individuals create safe and  
12 healthy communities, which further promote a safe and healthy  
13 state for all citizens.

14 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

15 (1) Establish the state of well-being project and a  
16 timeline for the project to:

17 (A) Assess the tiers of mental health support  
18 services that currently exist; and

19 (B) Enhance existing well-being programming and, when  
20 non-existent, build out culturally grounded and  
21 community-informed well-being programming to



1                   establish mental health support services for key  
2                   stakeholder communities across the State; and

3           (2)   Appropriate funds.

4           SECTION 2. Chapter 27, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended  
5 by adding a new section to part IX to be appropriately  
6 designated and to read as follows:

7           "§27-    State of well-being project; established.   (a)

8 There is established within the office the state of well-being  
9 project to assess and enhance tier 1 and tier 2 mental health  
10 support services for key stakeholder communities across the  
11 State. The project shall:

12           (1) Assess and enhance existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental  
13 health training and ongoing support services to public  
14 schools, public community centers, first responder  
15 groups, police departments, fire departments,  
16 hospitals, and medical staff and, when non-existent,  
17 build out culturally grounded and community-informed  
18 well-being programming;

19           (2) Track and measure aggregate mental health trends  
20 across all populations served by the project; and



1       (3) Hire and train mental health specialists and work with  
2       approved partner organizations identified by the  
3       office to lead project execution across tier 1 and  
4       tier 2 support services in each key stakeholder  
5       community.

6       (b) The office shall administer the state of well-being  
7       project in accordance with the following timeline:

8       (1) Beginning in 2024, initiate a landscape assessment of  
9       existing tier 1 and tier 2 services by December 31,  
10       2025; and

11       (2) Beginning in 2025, initiate the enhancement of  
12       existing tier 1 and tier 2 services and, when non-  
13       existent, build out culturally grounded and community-  
14       informed well-being programming, with statewide  
15       implementation to be achieved by December 31, 2027."

16       SECTION 3. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
17       amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
18       and to read as follows:

19       "§346- State of well-being project; established. (a)  
20       There is established within the office the state of well-being  
21       project to assess and enhance tier 1 and tier 2 mental health



1 support services for key stakeholder communities across the  
2 State. The project shall:

3 (1) Assess and enhance existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental  
4 health training and ongoing support services to public  
5 schools, public community centers, first responder  
6 groups, police departments, fire departments,  
7 hospitals, and medical staff and, when non-existent,  
8 build out culturally grounded and community-informed  
9 well-being programming;

10 (2) Track and measure aggregate mental health trends  
11 across all populations served by the project; and

12 (3) Hire and train mental health specialists and work with  
13 approved partner organizations identified by the  
14 office to lead project execution across tier 1 and  
15 tier 2 support services in each key stakeholder  
16 community.

17 (b) The office shall administer the state of well-being  
18 project in accordance with the following timeline:

19 (1) Beginning in 2024, initiate a landscape assessment of  
20 existing tier 1 and tier 2 services by December 31,  
21 2025; and



1       (2) Beginning in 2025, initiate the enhancement of  
2       existing tier 1 and tier 2 services and, when non-  
3       existent, build out culturally grounded and community-  
4       informed well-being programming, with statewide  
5       implementation to be achieved by December 31, 2027."

6       SECTION 4. 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 5. 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 to  
 4 establish the state of well-being project and fund full-  
 5 time equivalent ( .0 FTE) mental health specialist positions  
 6 within the office of wellness and resilience.

7 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of  
 8 wellness and resilience for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024;  
 11 provided that:

12 (1) Section 2 of this Act shall be repealed on June 30,  
 13 2025; and

14 (2) Section 3 of this Act shall take effect on July 1,  
 15 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY:

*Daniel Hironaka*



# S.B. NO. 3279

**Report Title:**

OWR; State of Well-being Project; Tier 1 and Tier 2 Mental Health Support Services; Expenditure Ceiling; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes within the Office of Wellness and Resilience the State of Well-being Project to assess and enhance tier 1 and tier 2 mental health support services for all key stakeholder communities across the State. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. Makes an appropriation to establish an unspecified number of full-time equivalent mental health specialist positions within the Office of Wellness and Resilience.

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

