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

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



1 critical medical and oral health safety net, approximately  
2 forty-two thousand people of all ages and covered by all types  
3 of health insurance were served by the health centers in 2021.

4 The legislature additionally finds that while the  
5 department of health operates five small dental clinics and also  
6 serves individuals who are elderly, blind, intellectually  
7 disabled, developmentally disabled, and mentally ill, all  
8 clinics are located in the city and county of Honolulu. The  
9 State does not operate dental clinics to serve similar  
10 populations in other counties. The legislature notes that three  
11 hundred thirty-nine dentists in the State currently accept and  
12 treat adults covered by medicaid.

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

18 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 19 (1) Establish an oral health task force to review  
20 information and data on the status of oral health in



1 the State and make recommendations to improve the  
2 State's oral health infrastructure; and

3 (2) Appropriate funds to help facilitate the work of the  
4 oral health task force.

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

8 (b) The oral health task force shall:

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

14 (2) Review all information and data relating to the  
15 department of health oral health program functions and  
16 processes and make recommendations regarding  
17 organizational structure, personnel needs, contracted  
18 service needs, required resources, and potential  
19 additional funding and support;

20 (3) Review and analyze systemic issues in oral health  
21 services and processes statewide and make



1 recommendations for systemic changes and improvements  
2 to improve equity in oral health;

3 (4) Develop an oral health strategic blueprint that  
4 includes goals, objectives, specific actions, and  
5 resources needed;

6 (5) Act as a systemic facilitator for key oral health  
7 stakeholders so that complex and problematic issues  
8 can be discussed and addressed in a timely and  
9 effective manner;

10 (6) Ensure that there are agreed-upon community metrics  
11 for analyzing the development and implementation of  
12 medicaid funding for oral health; and

13 (7) Make recommendations to state and county policymakers  
14 regarding systemic actions recommended to improve oral  
15 health in Hawaii.

16 (c) The oral health task force shall consist of the  
17 following members:

18 (1) One representative of the family health services  
19 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
20 by the director of health;



- 1 (2) One representative of the developmental disabilities  
2 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
3 by the director of health;
- 4 (3) One representative of the med-QUEST division of the  
5 department of human services, to be appointed by the  
6 director of human services;
- 7 (4) One representative of the student services branch of  
8 the department of education, to be appointed by the  
9 superintendent of education;
- 10 (5) One representative of the state council on  
11 developmental disabilities, to be appointed by the  
12 speaker of the house of representatives;
- 13 (6) One faculty member of the university of Hawaii at  
14 Manoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch school of nursing dental  
15 hygiene program, to be appointed by the speaker of the  
16 house of representatives;
- 17 (7) One representative of the university of Hawaii John A.  
18 Burns school of medicine, to be appointed by the  
19 president of the senate;
- 20 (8) 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 (9) One representative of the county of Maui who is a  
4 member of the private practice dental community who is  
5 working with the adult medicaid population or other  
6 medicaid-associated dentists, to be appointed by the  
7 speaker of the house of representatives;

8 (10) One representative of the county of Kauai who is a  
9 community oral health representative, to be appointed  
10 by the president of the senate;

11 (11) One representative of the city and county of Honolulu  
12 who is a member of the private practice dental  
13 community who is working with the adult medicaid  
14 population or other medicaid-associated dentists, to  
15 be appointed by the speaker of the house of  
16 representatives;

17 (12) One representative of the Hawaii Oral Health  
18 Coalition, to be invited by the president of the  
19 senate;



- 1           (13) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Association,  
2                   to be invited by the speaker of the house of  
3                   representatives;
- 4           (14) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Service, to be  
5                   invited by the president of the senate;
- 6           (15) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Service  
7                   Foundation, to be invited by the speaker of the house  
8                   of representatives;
- 9           (16) One representative of a Hawaii dental medicaid  
10                   insurer, to be invited by the president of the senate;
- 11           (17) Two community advocates for medicaid and oral health,  
12                   one each to be invited by the speaker of the house of  
13                   representatives and president of the senate,  
14                   respectively;
- 15           (18) One representative of the Hawaii Primary Care  
16                   Association, to be invited by the president of the  
17                   senate;
- 18           (19) One representative of the Native Hawaiian Health Care  
19                   Systems, to be invited by the speaker of the house of  
20                   representatives;



1 (20) One representative of Papa Ola Lokahi, to be invited  
2 by the president of the senate; and

3 (21) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Hygienists'  
4 Association, to be invited by the speaker of the house  
5 of representatives.

6 (d) The representative of the family health services  
7 division of the department of health shall serve as the  
8 chairperson of the task force. If the representative of the  
9 family health services division of the department of health is  
10 unable to serve as the chairperson of the task force, the  
11 members of the task force shall select a chairperson from among  
12 the remaining members.

13 (e) The oral health task force shall submit an interim  
14 report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature no  
15 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular  
16 Session of 2025. The department of health shall submit a final  
17 report of the oral health task force's findings and  
18 recommendations, as part of its annual report submitted pursuant  
19 to section 321-63, Hawaii Revised Statutes, including any  
20 proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty  
21 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027.





1 (f) The task force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2027.

2 (g) Less than a quorum of task force members may discuss  
3 task force business together outside of a duly noticed meeting;  
4 provided that the members report the matters discussed at the  
5 next duly noticed meeting of the task force, and that no  
6 commitment to vote is made or sought. These discussions shall  
7 be a permitted interaction under section 92-2.5, Hawaii Revised  
8 Statutes.

9 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII, of  
10 the Constitution of the State of Hawaii and sections 37-91 and  
11 37-93, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined  
12 that the appropriations contained in this Act will cause the  
13 state general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025  
14 to be exceeded by \$ , or per cent. The reasons  
15 for exceeding the general fund expenditure ceiling are that the  
16 appropriations made in this Act are necessary to serve the  
17 public interest and to meet the needs provided for by 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 2024-2025 for  
21 the family health services division of the department of health



1 to contract with a consultant to facilitate the work of the oral  
2 health task force, including completing the interim and final  
3 reports required by subsection (e) of section 2 of this Act.

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

6 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general  
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
8 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for  
9 the establishment of permanent full-time equivalent  
10 ( FTE) program specialist V positions within the family  
11 health services division of the department of health.

12 This position shall:

13 (1) Collect, analyze, and evaluate information relevant to  
14 specific oral health policy issues and related  
15 material to enable oral health task force members to  
16 develop informed policy recommendations affecting oral  
17 health care;

18 (2) Serve as the representative of the department of  
19 health oral health program to the Hawaii Oral Health  
20 Coalition;



1 (3) Develop, administer, monitor, and provide oversight of  
2 the contract for a consultant to facilitate the work  
3 of the oral health task force; and

4 (4) Serve as a liaison between the department of health  
5 and other state agencies on the oral health task  
6 force.

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

9 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;  
10 provided that sections 4 and 5 shall take effect on July 1,  
11 2024.



**Report Title:**

Oral Health; Task Force; Department of Health; Positions;  
Reports; Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

**Description:**

Establishes an Oral Health Task Force to review the status of oral health in the State and make recommendations to improve the State's oral health infrastructure. Requires reports to the Legislature. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

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

