
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 Native Hawaiians,
2 Pacific Islanders, and other people of color have
3 disproportionately high rates of suicide. Suicide rates and
4 suicide attempts are also disproportionately high among the
5 State's youth. According to the department of health, between
6 2005 and 2013, up to twenty per cent of high school-aged
7 children in the State had suicidal ideation. Suicide is the
8 fourth leading cause of death for children between the ages of
9 ten and fourteen and the leading cause of death for young people
10 between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four. The State's
11 hospitals also see hundreds of patients per year having self-
12 inflicted injuries, and more than twenty per cent of these are
13 under the age of eighteen.

14 The legislature recognizes that these numbers illustrate
15 the need for additional behavioral health specialists to provide
16 mental health services in the State's rural schools. Students
17 in Hawaii may be experiencing trauma, grief, family separation,



1 depression, and other crises, and many school counseling offices
2 are short-staffed. Other school counseling offices are staffed
3 by social workers, who may lack the expertise and specialized
4 training to address mental health concerns.

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
6 funds to hire complex-based behavioral health specialists for
7 the State's rural public schools.

8 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$861,000 or so much
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the
11 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
12 2024-2025 to hire complex-based behavioral health specialists
13 for the State's rural public schools.

14 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
15 of education for the purposes of this Act.

16 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.



Report Title:

DOE; Behavioral Health Services; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to hire complex-based behavioral health specialists for Hawaii's rural public schools. (SD1)

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

