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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the return-to-home  
2 pilot program established by Act 94, Session Laws of Hawaii  
3 2023, has been a success, sending over one hundred homeless  
4 individuals back to their home states in the State's partnership  
5 with The Institute for Human Services, Inc.

6           The legislature further finds that additional manpower  
7 would assist in furthering the program.

8           Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to repeal the  
9 return-to-home pilot program, establish the return-to-home  
10 program on a permanent basis, and appropriate funds for the  
11 program's continued operations.

12           SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
13 amended by adding a new section to part XVIII to be  
14 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

15           "§346-           Return-to-home program. (a) The statewide  
16 office on homelessness and housing solutions shall coordinate a  
17 voluntary homeless assistance program, to be known as the



1 return-to-home program, to provide eligible homeless individuals  
2 with assistance in being reunited with family and relatives in  
3 the individual's home state. The office shall establish a  
4 public-private partnership by contracting with eligible  
5 nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, or  
6 foundations to administer the program in compliance with  
7 chapters 103D and 103F. The governor's coordinator on  
8 homelessness may assist with the implementation of this program.

9 (b) An individual who is homeless shall be eligible to  
10 participate in the return-to-home program if:

11 (1) The individual's participation is completely  
12 voluntary;

13 (2) The individual, if on parole, probation, or awaiting a  
14 court hearing or sentencing, has proper clearance from  
15 the court to participate in the program;

16 (3) The individual is indigent and lacks the financial  
17 resources necessary to secure transportation to return  
18 to the individual's home state;

19 (4) The statewide office on homelessness and housing  
20 solutions, or an agency contracted to administer the  
21 program, contacts the family or support group of the



1           individual and the family or support group confirms  
2           their acceptance of the individual returning to their  
3           home; and

4           (5) The individual's family or support group agrees to pay  
5           for half of the cost of transportation for the  
6           individual to return to the individual's home state;  
7           provided that this paragraph shall not apply if the  
8           family or support group lacks the resources necessary  
9           to cover half the cost of transportation for the  
10           individual; provided further that the office or the  
11           agency contracted to administer the program shall  
12           verify the family or support group's lack of resources  
13           before covering the entire flight cost of the  
14           individual.

15           (c) An individual shall participate in the return-to-home  
16 program only once and shall sign an agreement to this effect  
17 before participating in the program. The agreement shall be  
18 kept on file with the statewide office on homelessness and  
19 housing solutions.

20           (d) The return-to-home program shall actively seek the  
21 participation of local airlines, cruise lines, charter



1 companies, homeless programs, travel agencies, and the visitor  
2 industry to coordinate and implement the program.

3 (e) The return-to-home program shall assist program  
4 participants with necessary and proper preparations for travel,  
5 including obtaining proper identification, accessing public  
6 transportation to the airport, providing orientation relating to  
7 airport security, and ensuring sufficient personal hygiene.

8 (f) The statewide office on homelessness and housing  
9 solutions shall submit a report of its findings and  
10 recommendations relating to the return-to-home program,  
11 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later  
12 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular  
13 session."

14 SECTION 3. Act 94, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023, is  
15 repealed.

16 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
18 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and  
19 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
20 year 2026-2027 for the return-to-home program, including:



- 1 (1) full-time equivalent ( FTE) position to  
2 assist and supervise the program; and  
3 (2) Operation costs and other current expenses relating to  
4 the program.

5 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the statewide  
6 office on homelessness and housing solutions for the purposes of  
7 this Act.

8 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

OHHS; Homelessness; Return-to-Home Program; Report;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to establish a permanent Return-to-Home Program to return homeless individuals in the State to families and relatives in their home states. Requires the Office to report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

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

