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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that low-income subsidy  
2 programs, including medicare, medicaid, and medicare savings  
3 programs such as medicare part D extra help, can help reduce  
4 out-of-pocket costs for individuals with limited income by  
5 offsetting their medical and prescription drug costs, such as  
6 premiums, deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and lifetime  
7 late enrollment penalties. The legislature further finds that  
8 although individuals with low income, those who speak English as  
9 a second language, or those who live in rural areas may qualify  
10 for these programs, they may have no or limited access to the  
11 benefits, as they may not be aware of or need assistance with  
12 the application or eligibility renewal process.

13           The legislature further finds that the Hawaii state health  
14 insurance assistance program, administered by the executive  
15 office on aging of the department of health, provides free  
16 information and one-on-one counseling on medicare. Since 2022,  
17 the program has been receiving a significantly higher volume of



1 referrals from med-QUEST to assist uninsured or underinsured  
2 individuals who are losing their medicaid eligibility and need  
3 to find other health coverage. The overflow and referrals are  
4 made to community partners within forty-eight hours to help with  
5 food, housing, utilities, employment, and other needs.

6 The legislature also finds that during the COVID-19  
7 pandemic, the med-QUEST division of the department of human  
8 services paused disenrollments based on eligibility issues and  
9 all medicaid members received continuous uninterrupted coverage  
10 through March 2023, regardless of their change in eligibility.  
11 Following the 2023 Maui wildfires, the med-QUEST division again  
12 paused all eligibility disenrollments statewide until the end of  
13 2023. However, the med-QUEST division has resumed its annual  
14 eligibility redetermination process, and therefore, people have  
15 been or will be receiving notices and forms to renew their  
16 coverage.

17 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish within  
18 the Hawaii state health insurance assistance program a temporary  
19 medi-medi project to assist the underserved population in the  
20 State who may qualify for various low-income subsidy programs to  
21 gain access to their benefits.



1 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the Hawaii  
 2 state health insurance assistance program a medi-medi project to  
 3 assist older adults, medicare beneficiaries, individuals with  
 4 disabilities, and other underserved populations who may qualify  
 5 for various low-income subsidy programs, including medicare,  
 6 medicaid, and medicare savings programs such as medicare part D  
 7 extra help, to gain access to their benefits.

8 (b) The medi-medi project shall:

9 (1) Develop and implement a community outreach program;

10 (2) Streamline the application process for various low-  
 11 income subsidy programs; and

12 (3) Provide referrals and assistance to other low-income  
 13 programs.

14 (c) The executive office on aging shall submit a report of  
 15 its findings and recommendations regarding the medi-medi  
 16 project, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature  
 17 no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular  
 18 session.

19 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
 20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
 21 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 for



1 the Hawaii state health insurance assistance program, to be  
2 expended as follows:

3 (1) \$ for the establishment of one full-time  
4 equivalent (1.0 FTE) position to implement and  
5 administer the medi-medi project; and

6 (2) \$ for other operating expenses.

7 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the executive  
8 office on aging for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on December 31,  
10 2050.



**Report Title:**

Kupuna Caucus; EOA; SHIP; Low-Income Subsidy Programs; Medicaid; Medicare; Medi-Medi Project; Underserved Populations; Community Outreach; Application and Renewal Process; Reports; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a temporary Medi-Medi Project within the Hawaii State Health Insurance Assistance Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Aging to assist older adults, Medicare beneficiaries, individuals with disabilities, and other underserved populations who may qualify for various low-income subsidy programs to gain access to their benefits. Requires the Executive Office on Aging to submit reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 12/31/2050. (SD1)

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

