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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; ensure 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 while the adult medicaid  
14 population has limited access to dental care, there is a lack of  
15 dental providers for this population. The legislature notes  
16 that federally qualified health centers in each county are a  
17 critical medical and oral health safety net and approximately



1 forty-two thousand people of all ages and covered by all types  
2 of health insurance were served by the health centers in 2021.

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

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

17 The purpose of this Act is to:

18 (1) Establish an oral health task force to review  
19 information and data on the status of oral health in  
20 the State and make recommendations to improve the  
21 State's oral health infrastructure; and



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

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

6 (b) The oral health task force shall:

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

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

18 (3) Review and analyze systemic issues in oral health  
19 services and processes statewide and make  
20 recommendations for systemic changes and improvements  
21 to improve equity in oral health;



- 1 (4) Develop an oral health strategic blueprint that  
2 includes goals, objectives, specific actions, and  
3 resources needed;
- 4 (5) Act as a systemic facilitator for key oral health  
5 stakeholders so that complex and problematic issues  
6 can be discussed and addressed in a timely and  
7 effective manner;
- 8 (6) Ensure that there are agreed-upon community metrics  
9 for analyzing the development and implementation of  
10 medicaid funding for oral health; and
- 11 (7) Make recommendations to state and county policymakers  
12 regarding systemic actions recommended to improve oral  
13 health in Hawaii.
- 14 (c) The oral health task force shall consist of the  
15 following members:
- 16 (1) One representative of the family health services  
17 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
18 by the director of health;
- 19 (2) One representative of the developmental disabilities  
20 division of the department of health, to be appointed  
21 by the director of health;



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



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



1 representatives and president of the senate,

2 respectively;

3 (17) One representative of the Hawaii Primary Care  
4 Association, to be invited by the president of the  
5 senate;

6 (18) One representative of the Native Hawaiian Health Care  
7 Systems, to be invited by the speaker of the house of  
8 representatives;

9 (19) One representative of Papa Ola Lokahi, to be invited  
10 by the president of the senate;

11 (20) One representative of the Hawaii Dental Hygienists'  
12 Association, to be invited by the speaker of the house  
13 of representatives; and

14 (21) One representative advocate from the private practice  
15 dental community who is working with the adult  
16 medicaid population and other medicaid-associated  
17 dentists, to be invited by the director of health.

18 (d) The representative of the family health services  
19 division of the department of health shall serve as the  
20 chairperson of the task force. If the representative of the  
21 family health services division of the department of health is



1 unable to serve as the chairperson of the task force, the  
2 members of the task force shall select a chairperson from among  
3 the remaining members.

4 (e) The oral health task force shall submit an interim  
5 report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature no  
6 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular  
7 session of 2026. The department of health shall submit a final  
8 report of the oral health task force's findings and  
9 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
10 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
11 the regular session of 2028.

12 (f) The task force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2028.

13 (g) The task force shall be exempt from part I of chapter  
14 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

15 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
17 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and  
18 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
19 year 2026-2027 for the family health services division of the  
20 department of health to contract with a consultant to facilitate  
21 the work of the oral health task force, including completing the





1 interim and final reports required by subsection (e) of section  
2 2 of this Act.

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

5 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
7 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and  
8 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
9 year 2026-2027 for the establishment of full-time  
10 equivalent ( FTE) temporary program specialist V position  
11 within the family health services division of the department of  
12 health.

13 This position shall:

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

19 (2) Serve as the representative of the department of  
20 health oral health program to the Hawaii Oral Health  
21 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 sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
8 of health for the purposes of this Act.

9       SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Department of Health; Oral Health Task Force; Position; Reports; Appropriation

**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. Establishes temporary full-time equivalent program specialist V positions. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

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