

JAN 23 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS RESEARCH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that establishing an
2 organized Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD)
3 research unit at the university of Hawaii is essential to
4 advance scientific research, improve diagnosis and treatment,
5 and provide better care for individuals affected by these
6 conditions. A National Institute on Aging designated
7 Alzheimer's Disease Research Center would significantly enhance
8 the university's research capabilities and attract major federal
9 funding; however, achieving designation requires resources,
10 coordination, and a dedicated team of expert researchers and
11 staff. This goal is attainable through a phased approach that
12 begins with capacity-building and strategic partnerships, and
13 includes incremental steps to strengthen research
14 infrastructure, such as creating key faculty and staff positions
15 over time.

16 The legislature further finds that Hawaii's unique
17 demographic composition, including a significant Asian American



1 and Pacific Islander population, presents an unparalleled
2 opportunity to conduct dementia research that reflects genetic,
3 cultural, and environmental factors distinct from those studied
4 at mainland research centers. This focus would fill critical
5 gaps in scientific knowledge and inform culturally tailored
6 interventions, benefiting both state and national research
7 agendas.

8 Establishing an Alzheimer's disease and related dementia
9 research center in the State will leverage existing resources
10 and collaborations among the university of Hawaii John A. Burns
11 school of medicine, university of Hawaii center on aging, cancer
12 research center of Hawaii, and community partners; create
13 efficiencies by utilizing existing infrastructure and shared
14 services; strengthen interdisciplinary research across medicine,
15 public health, and social sciences; expand access to clinical
16 trials; and improve patient care—particularly for rural and
17 neighbor island communities. Strategic partnerships with
18 Kuakini Health System, Hawai'i Pacific Health, and The Queen's
19 Health Systems will further enhance clinical research capacity
20 and integration with statewide health care delivery. This
21 initiative will also support workforce development, complement



1 any future neurology training program, and generate economic
2 benefits through job creation and increased federal research
3 funding. Therefore, the legislature finds that the
4 establishment of an Alzheimer's disease and related dementias
5 research center of Hawaii is a matter of statewide concern.

6 The purpose of this Act is to establish an organized
7 Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of
8 Hawaii within the university of Hawaii as the first phase of a
9 strategic plan to build capacity and position the State for
10 future National Institute on Aging designation.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
12 amended by adding a new section to part IV to be appropriately
13 designated and to read as follows:

14 "§304A- Alzheimer's disease and related dementias
15 research center of Hawaii. (a) There is established an
16 organized research unit, hereinafter known as the Alzheimer's
17 disease and related dementias research center of Hawaii, to
18 conduct research on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
19 The Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of
20 Hawaii shall be administered by a director to be appointed in
21 accordance with the board of regents' policy.



1 (b) The Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research
2 center of Hawaii shall be administratively affiliated with the
3 university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine. The
4 administrative services and infrastructure teams of the
5 Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of
6 Hawaii and the university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of
7 medicine may be merged to achieve greater efficiency.

8 (c) The provost of the university of Hawaii at Manoa shall
9 have authority to direct and achieve efficiencies at the
10 university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine and
11 Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of
12 Hawaii.

13 (d) The programs of the university of Hawaii John A. Burns
14 school of medicine and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias
15 research center of Hawaii, the university of Hawaii center on
16 aging, and the university of Hawaii at Manoa shall identify
17 opportunities to:

18 (1) Capitalize on collaboration between the programs; and
19 (2) Maximize operational efficiencies among the university
20 of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine,
21 Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research



1 center of Hawaii, and the university of Hawaii center
2 on aging, including but not limited to shared services
3 and personnel, whenever feasible, and utilization of
4 centralized services available through the university
5 of Hawaii at Manoa, whenever appropriate.

6 (e) The Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research
7 center of Hawaii's research agenda shall focus on research,
8 education, patient care, and community outreach and reflect an
9 understanding of the ethnic, cultural, and environmental
10 characteristics of the State and the Pacific region.

11 (f) The Alzheimer's disease and related dementia research
12 center of Hawaii may be staffed by, but not be limited to, the
13 following positions:

14 (1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) senior clinician
15 scientist who shall be on tenure track;
16 (2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) coordinator of the
17 designated research unit;
18 (3) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) staff position;
19 (4) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) clinical research
20 nurse;

1 (5) Two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) faculty positions
2 to be allocated among junior investigators as
3 part-time appointments, including a part-time
4 neuropathologist as required for the neuropathology
5 core of an Alzheimer's disease research center to
6 receive funding from the National Institute on Aging.

7 (g) The Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research
8 center of Hawaii may:

9 (1) Engage in international research collaborations;
10 (2) Undertake research studies and clinical trials; and
11 (3) Participate in projects and programs of the National
12 Institutes of Health and the National Institute on
13 Aging, including but not limited to research centers
14 designated by the National Institute on Aging as
15 Alzheimer's disease research centers.

16 (h) The Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research
17 center of Hawaii shall submit an annual report to the
18 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
19 each regular session. The report shall include:

20 (1) A summary of research activities, collaborations, and
21 clinical trials conducted by the research center;



1 (2) Progress toward securing federal funding and
2 designation as an Alzheimer's disease research center
3 by the National Institute on Aging;
4 (3) Financial expenditures and funding sources;
5 (4) Community outreach and education efforts; and
6 (5) Recommendations including proposed legislation for
7 budgetary support."

8 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$375,000 or so much
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
11 establishment of the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias
12 Research Center of Hawaii, including the establishment of:

13 (1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) faculty senior
14 clinician scientist position; and
15 (2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) administrative,
16 professional, and technical center coordinator
17 (administrative lead) position in the university of
18 Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine, specializing
19 in neurology and dementia.

20 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the university of
21 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

2 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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INTRODUCED BY: Anna Mercado Ki



S.B. NO. 2657

Report Title:

University of Hawaii; Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias; Research Center; JABSOM; Center on Aging; Reports; Appropriation; Positions

Description:

Establishes the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Research Center of Hawaii within the University of Hawaii. Requires the Research Center to be administratively affiliated with the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine. Requires JABSOM, the Research Center, University of Hawaii Center on Aging, and University of Hawaii at Manoa to identify opportunities to capitalize on collaboration between the parties and maximize operational efficiencies. Requires the Research Center to submit annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

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