THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 2657 S.D. 1

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:

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

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

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

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

any future neurology training program, and generate economic benefits through job creation and increased federal research funding. Therefore, the legislature finds that the establishment of an Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of Hawaii is a matter of statewide concern pursuant to article X, section 6, of the Hawaii State Constitution.

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

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

"**§304A- Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of Hawaii; established.** (a) There is established an organized research unit, hereinafter known as the Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of Hawaii, to conduct research on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The Alzheimer's disease and related dementias

research center of Hawaii shall be administered by a director to be appointed in accordance with the board of regents' policy.

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

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

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

(1) Capitalize on collaboration between the programs; and

(2) Maximize operational efficiencies among the university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of Hawaii, and the university of Hawaii center on aging, including but not limited to shared services and personnel, whenever feasible, and utilization of centralized services available through the university of Hawaii at Manoa, whenever appropriate.

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

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

(1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) senior clinician scientist who shall be on tenure track;

(2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) coordinator of the organized research unit;

(3) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) staff position;

(4) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) clinical research nurse; and

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

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

(1) Engage in international research collaborations;

(2) Undertake research studies and clinical trials; and

(3) Participate in projects and programs of the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute on Aging, including but not limited to projects and programs of research centers designated by the National Institute on Aging as Alzheimer's disease research centers.

(h) The Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of Hawaii shall submit an annual report to the

legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session. The report shall include:

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

(2) Progress toward securing federal funding and designation as an Alzheimer's disease research center by the National Institute on Aging;

(3) Financial expenditures and funding sources;

(4) Community outreach and education efforts; and

(5) Recommendations, including proposed legislation for budgetary support."

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the establishment of the Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research center of Hawaii, including the establishment of:

(1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) faculty senior clinician scientist position; and

(2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) administrative, professional, and technical center coordinator

(administrative lead) position in the university of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine, specializing in neurology and dementia.

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

SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

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

S.B. NO. 2657 S.D. 1

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

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. Establishes positions. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

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