

JAN 23 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State has
2 accumulated an estimated \$470,000,000 in unspent temporary
3 assistance for needy families funding with approximately
4 \$333,000,000 in encumbrances on that funding. These moneys are
5 required to be spent on needy families and families that are
6 especially susceptible to charges of neglect for failure to
7 provide shelter, supervision, and other necessities for their
8 children.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to utilize some of
10 the unspent and unencumbered federal assistance moneys to
11 establish within the office of wellness and resilience a kakou
12 pilot program to support families and children in need.

13 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the office of
14 wellness and resilience the kakou pilot program to support
15 families in need.

16 (b) The kakou pilot program shall:



- 1 (1) Provide services for children in need, including child
2 wellness visits;
- 3 (2) Distribute food boxes to eligible families, as needed;
- 4 (3) Provide counseling and related support services to
5 eligible families with a focus on families exiting a
6 foster family placement;
- 7 (4) Administer trauma-informed care services to vulnerable
8 families and children in danger of neglect; and
- 9 (5) Provide any other related services to support families
10 and children in need in accordance with this Act.

11 (c) The office of wellness and resilience may adopt
12 policies and procedures necessary to implement the kakou pilot
13 program and to carry out the purposes of this Act.

14 (d) The office of wellness and resilience shall submit a
15 report of its findings and recommendations on the kakou pilot
16 program, including any proposed legislation and recommendations
17 on whether the program should continue, to the legislature no
18 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular
19 session of 2027.

20 (e) The kakou pilot program shall cease to exist
21 on .



1 (f) For the purposes of this Act:

2 "Eligible families" means families receiving support from
3 the temporary assistance for needy families program, and any
4 other families meeting standards and requirements established by
5 the office of wellness and resilience.

6 SECTION 3. Act 127, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, is
7 amended by amending section 1 as follows:

8 1. By amending subsection (b) to read:

9 "(b) The pilot program shall pay \$50 to each [state
10 ~~medicaid benefit~~] eligible recipient for each completed
11 well-child examination of that recipient parent's child;
12 provided that only one payment may be made per child each year."

13 2. By amending subsection (e) by adding a new definition
14 to be appropriately inserted and to read:

15 "Eligible recipient" means a parent receiving support from
16 the temporary assistance for needy families program, and any
17 other parent meeting standards and requirements established by
18 the office of wellness and resilience."

19 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
20 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval,
2 and shall be repealed on .

3

INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 2861

Report Title:

OWR; Kakou Pilot Program; TANF; Child Wellness Visits; Food Boxes; Supportive Services; Wellness Benefit; Foster Family Placement; Med-QUEST

Description:

Establishes within the Office of Wellness and Resilience the Kakou Pilot Program to support families and children in need. Expands eligibility for the \$50 benefit established by Act 127, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, to include families ineligible for state Medicaid benefits.

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