

MAR 16 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE CONVENING OF A MENTAL HEALTH EMERGING THERAPIES TASK FORCE TO PREPARE THE STATE FOR THE INTEGRATION OF BREAKTHROUGH THERAPIES AND TO EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND CLINICAL TRIALS, RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS, AND TREATMENT CAPACITY IN THE STATE.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii continues to face a significant mental
2 health crisis affecting residents across the State, including
3 veterans, first responders, trauma survivors, and individuals
4 experiencing treatment-resistant mental health conditions; and
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6 WHEREAS, suicide remains one of the leading causes of
7 preventable death in Hawaii and across the United States,
8 underscoring the need to explore safe and effective treatment
9 options supported by scientific evidence; and
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11 WHEREAS, the United States Food and Drug Administration has
12 granted breakthrough therapy designation to several emerging
13 treatments, including 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)-
14 assisted therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder and
15 psilocybin-assisted therapy for treatment-resistant depression,
16 recognizing their potential to provide significant improvement
17 over existing interventions; and
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19 WHEREAS, as federal rescheduling and regulatory approval of
20 these therapies are anticipated, states must proactively prepare
21 public health systems, clinical providers, and research
22 institutions for their safe and responsible implementation; and
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24 WHEREAS, several states, including New Mexico, Texas,
25 Oregon, and Connecticut, have begun establishing frameworks to
26 support clinical research, pilot programs, and responsible
27 access pathways for emerging therapies; and
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29 WHEREAS, without similar planning and coordination, Hawaii
30 risks falling behind in preparing its health care systems,
31 research institutions, and workforce to responsibly implement
32 these therapies when federally authorized; now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
3 that the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health is
4 urged to convene a Mental Health Emerging Therapies Task Force
5 to prepare the State for the integration of breakthrough
6 therapies and to explore opportunities to expand clinical
7 trials, research partnerships, and treatment capacity in the
8 State; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is urged to
11 include representatives of the Department of Health; University
12 of Hawaii; and mental health professionals, legal and regulatory
13 experts, Native Hawaiian health organizations, and individuals
14 with lived experience, including veterans, first responders, and
15 caregivers to be invited by the chairpersons of the Task Force;
16 and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a member representing the
19 Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health with
20 demonstrated history and expertise in breakthrough and emerging
21 therapies is requested to serve as the chairperson of the Task
22 Force; and
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is urged to:
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- 26 (1) Prepare the State for federal rescheduling and medical
27 approval of 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA),
28 psilocybin, and other drugs or treatments designated
29 as breakthrough therapies by the United States Food
30 and Drug Administration;
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- 32 (2) Identify opportunities and requirements for expanding
33 local clinical trials, investigator-initiated
34 research, and university-based research partnerships;
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- 36 (3) Develop educational partnerships to help expand
37 awareness of clinical research opportunities for
38 potential beneficiaries of breakthrough therapies;
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- 40 (4) Recommend training, certification, and workforce
41 development pathways for licensed professionals who
42 may administer or support emerging therapies;



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- 1 (5) Evaluate best practices from other jurisdictions
2 regarding patient safety, culturally-informed care,
3 equity, access, and harm reduction;
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- 5 (6) Develop a statewide implementation roadmap for
6 integrating emerging therapies pending federal
7 approval; and
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- 9 (7) Make legislative, administrative, and other
10 recommendations to support long-term adoption of
11 mental health emerging therapies in the State.
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
14 submit a report summarizing its findings and recommendations,
15 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
16 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Sessions
17 of 2027 and 2028; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
20 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of Health,
21 President of the University of Hawaii, and Dean of the Thompson
22 School of Social Work and Public Health.
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OFFERED BY: 

