

ACT 107

S.B. NO. 1170

A Bill for an Act Relating to Children.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's healthy start program began as a child abuse prevention pilot project in 1985. It was expanded statewide in 2001 to prevent child abuse and neglect and to promote child health and development in newborns of families at risk for poor child outcomes. At one time, there was concern that certain families facing substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues were not being effectively enrolled in the program. As a result, a multi-disciplinary team was established, known as enhanced healthy start, to serve families at threatened harm levels of risk as well as infants and toddlers confirmed as being subject to abuse or neglect.

The following additional program changes have been recommended:

- (1) Increase prenatal intake as a means of increasing engagement, retention, and effectiveness;

- (2) Focus on risk factors identified on the Family Stress Checklist at assessment;
- (3) Improve the ratio of child development specialists and clinical specialists to the number of families served; and
- (4) Develop training to keep providers abreast of state-of-the art interventions.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate or authorize funds from temporary assistance for needy families to the department of human services for the healthy start program, including enhanced healthy start, to address budgetary shortfalls and to implement recommended improvements to the program.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated or authorized from temporary assistance for needy families funds the sum of \$1,660,409 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 and the same sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 to the department of human services for the healthy start program, including enhanced healthy start, for the hiring of a child development specialist or clinical specialist and for provider training.

The sums appropriated or authorized shall be expended by the department of human services for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.

(Approved May 29, 2007.)