

JAN 19 2007

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CAREGIVING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The number of grandparents raising
2 grandchildren is growing rapidly, both statewide and nationwide.
3 According to the United States Census Bureau, between 1990 and
4 2000, there was an over thirty per cent increase in the number
5 of children under age eighteen living in grandparent-headed
6 households in Hawaii. Of the 14,029 grandparents in Hawaii who
7 report that they are responsible for their resident
8 grandchildren, over one-fifth also report that the children's
9 parents are not present in the household.

10 The rapid increase in the number of grandparents raising
11 grandchildren is attributed to both demographic trends and
12 social issues. Grandparents today have an increased life
13 expectancy and relative good health compared to previous
14 generations. As a result, they are better able to assume the
15 responsibilities of custodial caregiving. Broad social issues
16 such as, divorce, substance abuse, incarceration, mental
17 illness, and abuse or neglect of the grandchildren are amongst



1 the reasons that grandparents take the role of primary
2 caregivers from their children.

3 Custodial grandparenting has emotional, physical, and
4 financial costs. Grandparents often report feeling guilt or
5 shame resulting from the situations that lead to them acquiring
6 custody of their grandchildren. They report more anxiety,
7 depression, and physical health problems than their non-
8 caregiving peers. Many of these grandparents are single,
9 female, and living in poverty. Their problems are often
10 exacerbated if they do not have legal custody of their
11 grandchildren, as they may not receive financial or educational
12 support or health care for their grandchildren.

13 Custodial grandparents need accurate and accessible
14 information on a myriad of issues, including legal aid for
15 custody or guardianship, financial assistance, counseling,
16 respite care, housing, health care, and education regarding
17 parenting for the second time.

18 It is important to have a clear understanding of the issues
19 facing and the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren in
20 Hawaii in order to formulate policies and programs to better
21 assist this population.



1 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$24,000, or so much
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008, for the
4 executive office on aging to conduct an assessment of the issues
5 facing, and the needs of, grandparents raising grandchildren in
6 Hawaii.

7 SECTION 3. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the
8 department of health for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 4. The department of health shall report to the
10 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
11 the 2008 regular session on the actions taken pursuant to their
12 Act.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.
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Report Title:

Appropriation; Caregiving

Description:

Makes an appropriation to the department of health for an assessment of the issues facing, and the needs of, grandparents raising grandchildren in Hawaii.

