

JAN 27 2021

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii was not
2 prepared for the first round of stay-at-home, work-from-home
3 orders triggered by the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. The
4 immediate halt in most personal interactions resulted in
5 disruptions to business, education, healthcare, essential
6 government services, and social events and activities. These
7 disruptions highlighted the State's vulnerabilities, which were
8 exacerbated by inadequate digital infrastructure and
9 insufficient connectivity to the global broadband network.
10 Therefore, the provision of equitable and robust access to
11 broadband continues to be among the State's most pressing
12 challenges.

13 Hawaii needs to invest in open access, carrier-neutral
14 cable landing infrastructure to attract transpacific fiber optic
15 cable companies and expand its fiber connectivity to the world
16 and throughout the islands, particularly in rural, underserved,
17 and unserved communities, to achieve the digital equity



1 necessary to build a resilient digital economy. Attracting
2 partners with the necessary technical expertise and resources
3 can develop Hawaii into a strategic communications and knowledge
4 hub in the Pacific. This hub would incorporate a robust global
5 communications network and provide cloud platforms to establish
6 the next generation applications, such as artificial
7 intelligence and smart communities, in Hawaii.

8 The legislature further finds that to build a robust
9 broadband infrastructure, the State must act quickly to take
10 advantage of various federal and private funds available this
11 year. For example, the 2021 federal Consolidated Appropriations
12 Act earmarks:

- 13 (1) At least \$30,000,000 for the department of Hawaiian
14 home lands;
- 15 (2) \$3,200,000,000 nationally in an emergency broadband
16 benefit for low-income Americans to get connected or
17 remain connected to broadband;
- 18 (3) \$250,000,000 nationally for a new telehealth pilot
19 program;
- 20 (4) \$300,000,000 for a national grant program to fund
21 broadband in rural areas; and



1 (5) \$65,000,000 for the improvement of the nation's
2 broadband maps.

3 The legislature notes that the first phase of deployment of
4 these federal funds, in part, supports the South American
5 Pacific Link, a transpacific fiber cable project that would
6 connect Hawaii to South America, Central America, and the east
7 coast of the continental United States. Additionally, over
8 \$100,000,000 is available from the U.S. Department of
9 Transportation Federal Highway Administration to address the
10 broadband capacity to support telecommuting through pilot
11 projects focused on building broadband infrastructure.

12 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to ensure that the
13 State takes full advantage of available funds to build the
14 broadband infrastructure necessary to sustain interconnectivity
15 throughout islands by:

16 (1) Establishing a three-year broadband infrastructure
17 task force to develop and support projects and the
18 partnerships to build and sustain the State's
19 broadband infrastructure; and

20 (2) Appropriating funds for fiscal year 2021-2022 and
21 fiscal year 2022-2023 for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 2. (a) There shall be established a broadband
2 infrastructure task force to establish the partnerships and
3 plans to build and sustain a statewide broadband infrastructure
4 that provides all major islands with transpacific and rural
5 connectivity that will advance and achieve digital inclusion and
6 equity for all residents of Hawaii. Specifically, the broadband
7 infrastructure task force shall:

8 (1) Obtain funds from the Consolidated Appropriations Act
9 of 2021 and the U.S. Department of Transportation-
10 Federal Highways Administration to build critical
11 broadband infrastructure that meet the current and
12 future needs of Hawaii, especially those in rural,
13 unserved, underserved, and historically marginalized
14 communities;

15 (2) Develop and implement pilot projects to build the
16 broadband infrastructure across the islands; and

17 (3) Prepare a statewide broadband infrastructure plan,
18 which includes program and budgetary requirements for
19 building, managing, and maintaining key strategic
20 broadband infrastructure, based on its experience with
21 the pilot projects in paragraph (2).



1 (b) The comptroller of the department of accounting and
2 general services and the highways division deputy director of
3 transportation shall co-chair the broadband infrastructure task
4 force. The department of business, economic development and
5 tourism's chief broadband strategy officer shall serve as the
6 assistant co-chair. Other members of the broadband
7 infrastructure task force may include the following individuals
8 or their designees:

- 9 (1) The chairperson of the department of Hawaiian home
10 lands;
- 11 (2) The chief information officer of the office of
12 enterprise technology services;
- 13 (3) The chief information officer of the University of
14 Hawaii;
- 15 (4) The administrator of the cable television division of
16 the department of commerce and consumer affairs;
- 17 (5) The director of the Hawaii public housing authority;
- 18 (6) One member appointed by the president of the senate;
19 and
- 20 (7) One member appointed by the speaker of the house of
21 representatives.



1 The broadband infrastructure task force shall also consist of
2 four additional representatives to be designated by the co-
3 chairs; provided that each representative has knowledge and
4 private sector expertise in Hawaii's technology,
5 telecommunications, or investment industries, or any combination
6 thereof.

7 (c) The members of the broadband infrastructure task force
8 shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for
9 expenses, including travel expenses, necessary for the
10 performance of their duties.

11 (d) The broadband infrastructure task force shall be
12 exempt from chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and shall act
13 in an advisory capacity.

14 (e) The co-chairs of the broadband infrastructure task
15 force shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
16 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later
17 than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session
18 of 2022. The report shall include:

19 (1) An accounting of all the funds that the broadband
20 infrastructure task force has applied for and obtained
21 from the federal government and other sources,



1 including the project results in expanding broadband
2 access in unserved and underserved areas;

3 (2) A plan, including program and budgetary requirements,
4 for building the statewide broadband capacity,
5 especially in rural, unserved, and underserved areas;
6 and

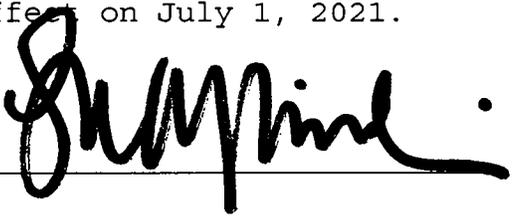
7 (3) Recommendations, including any legislation, to build
8 and sustain successful projects and partnerships that
9 facilitate broadband infrastructure in the State.

10 (f) The broadband infrastructure task force shall cease to
11 exist on June 30, 2024.

12 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$200,000 or so much
14 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 and the
15 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
16 2022-2023 for the purposes of this Act.

17 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
18 of accounting and general services for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

20
INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 1390

Report Title:

Broadband Infrastructure Task Force; Department of Business, Economic Development, And Tourism; Comptroller; Appropriations

Description:

Establishes a three-year broadband infrastructure task force to develop and support projects and partnerships to build and sustain the State's broadband infrastructure. Appropriates funds.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

