



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR
MIKE MCCARTNEY
DIRECTOR
CHUNG I. CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
MIKE MCCARTNEY
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

10:15 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 312

In consideration of

HCR161 / HR137

**SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY
DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.**

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt and members of the Committees. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) **supports HCR161 / HR137** that supports and adopts the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration of Hawaii adopted by the Broadband Hui.

The COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the need for broadband infrastructure and digital equity across all of Hawaii's residents especially those in rural unserved and underserved communities.

It is important that we recognize the work that is being done by the community stakeholders in the Broadband Hui as we strive to meet the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 03/23/2021
Time: 10:15 AM
Location: 312 Via Videoconference
Committee: House Economic
Development

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: HCR 0161 SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HCR 161 and respectfully offers the following comments:

While the Department appreciates Government Goal 1, which states, "By 2025, all government services available to the public are made accessible online through a single government portal, unless in-person interaction is otherwise necessary," there are certain services and information that parents/guardians may need to access for their child that requires Department-issued login credentials to information or parent portals due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the information, as well as for compliance with federal privacy laws. Therefore, although it would be possible to inform parents/guardians visiting the government portal of where to go to get information, they would be redirected to the appropriate Department information site or portal to access any services or information on their child.

While the Department appreciates Education Goal 1, which states, "By 2030, all students have the opportunity to participate in in-person, online, and hybrid learning," Department strategic goals and planning, as well as additions/amendments to curriculum policy, will need review and approval by the Board of Education. In addition, consistent and sustainable funding would be necessary for the Department to provide a diverse array of pedagogical approaches, including distance learning, blended learning and in-person learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in

every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.

HCR161/HR137
**SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY
DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.**

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Ho‘omohala Waiwai
House Committee on Economic Development

Malaki 23, 2021

10:15 a.m.

Lumi 312

The Administration of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend that the OHA Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** HCR161/HR137, which would urge the adoption of the goals set forth in the Equity Declaration put forth by the Broadband Hui. The Equity Declaration’s vision of **access**, **literacy** and **livelihood** for all communities through digital equity will be of particular benefit to many Native Hawaiian communities who may face significant disparities in access to broadband service.

OHA recognizes that many Native Hawaiians and Native Hawaiian communities may struggle with a lack of access to reliable and affordable broadband service, which may place them at a significant socioeconomic disadvantage, and perpetuate barriers to critical programs and services including in the areas of healthcare, education, and emergency response. For example, OHA notes that Native Hawaiians are highly represented in our rural communities: based on 2010 Census data, Native Hawaiians comprised the overwhelming majority of those living in Waimānalo, O‘ahu (81.3%); Kualapu‘u, Moloka‘i (71.9%); Nānākuli, O‘ahu (71.5%); ‘Ualapu‘e, Moloka‘i (70.6%); Maunaloa, Moloka‘i (67.3%) and Hāna, Maui (65.9%).¹ Meanwhile, the Federal Communications Commission’s 2018 Broadband Deployment Report indicated significant gaps in broadband access between Hawai‘i’s urban and rural areas, with only 63.1% of our rural population having access to the standard 25 Mbps download/3Mbps upload for fixed broadband access, compared to 98.5% of our urban population.² This disparity in broadband access between rural and urban areas has left our majority Native Hawaiian rural communities technologically and economically isolated and competitively disadvantaged.

In addition, digital inequities for Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders may be particularly concerning in the education context. For example, only 51% of Hawai‘i

¹ Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Native Hawaiian Data Book, <http://www.ohadatabook.com/> (last accessed March 15, 2021).

² FCC, 2018 BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT REPORT, APPENDIX F2, available at <https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/reports/broadband-progress-reports/2018-broadband-deployment-report>.

residents have access to affordable broadband plans;³ meanwhile, Native Hawaiian students may be disproportionately represented among the 49% of residents who do not have access to affordable broadband, given the high representation of Native Hawaiians in rural communities, and the lower median household income for Native Hawaiians (\$75,708) compared to the total state population (\$80,212).⁴ The shift of our public education system to virtual learning suggests that this lack of access to affordable broadband may particularly impact the education of Native Hawaiian students. Moreover, a survey from the Department of Education (DOE) has further indicated that “[s]tudents identifying as Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders are far less likely to have sufficient devices for distance learning,”⁵ again suggesting that a disproportionate number of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders may have been left behind in the DOE’s transition to virtual learning.

The Declaration for Digital Equity reflects and aligns with OHA’s concerns regarding the need for greater digital equity for the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, as the COVID-19 pandemic has further heightened the demand for reliable, affordable internet connectivity with work, education, civic engagement, and healthcare services being shifted online, the need to address the inequality in broadband access has become even more urgent. Addressing current and future inequality in internet and digital devices, as envisioned in the Declaration, will mitigate the disproportionate impacts of digital inequities on Native Hawaiians.

Accordingly, OHA respectfully urges this Committee to **PASS** HCR161/HR137. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

³ Broadband Now, *The State of Broadband in Hawaii*, <https://broadbandnow.com/Hawaii> (last accessed Mar. 20, 2021).

⁴ OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, ISSUE BRIEF: COVID-19 AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN COMMUNITIES 3 available at https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Issue-Brief.-Covid-19_corrected.pdf.

⁵ HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TEACHER AND STUDENT DISTANCE-LEARNING SURVEY (2020), available at <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/Preliminary%20Summary%20of%20Findings%20for%20Teacher%20and%20Student%20Distance%20Learning%20Survey.pdf>.



ALOHA CARE

To: The Honorable Representative Sean Quinlan, Chair
The Honorable Representative Daniel Holt, Vice-Chair
Committee on Economic Development

Date: Tuesday March 23, 2021 at 10:15 AM

From: Peggy Mierzwa, Sr. Public Policy Analyst, AlohaCare

RE: **HCR161/HR137, Relating to Broadband Service Infrastructure Support**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of **HCR161/HR137**, which would have the legislature support and adopt the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration adopted by the Broadband Hui. These goals include access to affordable and quality broadband for all, ensuring all residents have a baseline digital competency and that our society is able to leverage digital opportunities to improve the lives of all of our residents.

Founded in 1994, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving 73,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. We are the only non-profit Hawai'i health plan exclusively serving Medicaid patients. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating access to quality healthcare for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person care, including access to housing and food security, to build a stronger, healthier Hawaii.

AlohaCare supports the expansion of reliable broadband statewide as well as ensuring people have the digital literacy to effectively use online access. The past year has illustrated the need for us to connect with people in nontraditional ways. In rural settings or other unconnected areas, it is a challenge to ensure people are able to access the healthcare they need in order to either maintain health or address health concerns. Our kupuna also struggle to navigate the online systems in order to make and access appointments independently, including those appointments for Covid vaccinations.

The problems extend beyond telehealth. People were unable to adequately work or learn from home over the course of the past year because of either poor connectivity or lack of the ability to utilize the online systems. Access to these necessities are integral to a person's overall well-being as well as their ability to feel connected in various ways to their community.

The Broadband Hui is made of stakeholders from a variety of sectors. They have come together to ensure that all of our communities are able to access broadband and understand how to utilize online systems. This work is integral for the well-being of individuals, families and our state.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HCR161/HR137.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Development
Tuesday, March 23, 2021; 10:15 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 312
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 161/HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 137,
SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY
DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.**

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Concurrent Resolution No. 161 and House Resolution No. 137.

The resolutions, as received by your Committee, would support and adopt the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration that was adopted by the Broadband Hui.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

Hawaii has long been at the forefront of integrating newer technologies into daily life. One example of this is Hawaii's Telehealth Law which has served as a model across the United States. Yet, it was only after COVID struck our islands that this law became fully integrated into daily life.

Today, it is common practice to ZOOM or SKYPE with your health practitioner instead of physically going to the provider's office for a visit. When COVID first hit our islands, many health providers had to limit the number of patients that could be serviced in-person because of a scarcity of Personal Protective Equipment, restrictions in the gatherings of groups, and the need for changes to the physical arrangement of examination rooms and other diagnostic facilities.

Testimony on House Concurrent Resolution No. 161/House Resolution No. 137
Tuesday, March 23, 2021; 10:15 a.m.
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For people with adequate broadband access, telehealth was a lifeline for the provision of essential primary health care services. Yet, health care facilities in rural areas experienced the same problems when COVID hit. They too had to limit the number of patients they could see. But because these communities lacked adequate broadband access, they were effectively cut off from primary care. Many were forced to bear their maladies until it became necessary to go to the emergency room.

The Governor's suspension of a statute that prohibits the use of standard telephonic service in telehealth has temporarily eased this inequity. For those without adequate broadband, at least for now, they are able to obtain basic primary care services over landline telephones. But that is neither adequate, tenable, nor fair to the thousands of citizens who lack broadband access.

Because of this, the HPCA views the lack of broadband access in rural areas as an issue of social equity. In this day and age, everyone should have equal access to health care. Telehealth was envisioned as the means of leveling the field between urban and rural areas. The lack of broadband ensures that urban and rural communities remain unequal.

As a member of the Broadband Hui, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of these resolutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



House Committee on Economic Development

Date: March 23, 2021
 Time: 10:15a.m.
 Where: Via Videoconference
 Conference Room 312

RE: **HCR 161 / HR 137, SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI**

Aloha mai e Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt, and Committee Members,

The listed organizations and individuals **SUPPORT HCR 161 / HR 137**, to support and adopt the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration for Hawaii adopted by the Broadband Hui.

Over the past year, our organizations have collaborated, each within their own ability, to increase Hawai‘i’s digital capacity, thereby supporting the continuity of social connections, education, employment, and access to other essential services throughout the pandemic. Through the work of the Broadband Hui, we have supported broadband infrastructure development in rural communities, provided digital devices for students and families, supported the accessibility of telehealth, provided information on low-cost internet options, and adopted a Digital Equity Declaration to set a vision and goals for a more equitable digital future.

Looking to that future, much work remains ahead. It will take an ongoing commitment and collaboration from public and private partners to deliver on the goals set forth to address Hawai‘i’s digital inequities and to leverage the opportunities enabled by improved digital access.

We recognize this resolution supports the aspirational goals of the Broadband Hui Digital Equity Declaration and we believe that addressing digital inequity through broadband access, digital literacy, and digitally-enabled societal systems is one of our greatest opportunities for economic and social recovery, diversification, and resilience.

For these reasons, we kindly request you **PASS HCR 161 / HR 137**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

(Please see names on the following page.)

	Name	Organization	Email Address	Zip
1	Allicyn Tasaka	Hawaii Workforce Development Council	Allicyn.h.tasaka@hawaii.gov	96813
2	Barbara Tom	Waipahu Safe Haven Immigrant/ Migrant Resource Center	barbara.yukie@gmail.com	96701
3	Brad Kaleo Bennett	Auamo Collaborative	kaleobennett@gmail.com	96720
4	Burt Lum	State of HI Department of Business Economic Development Tourism	burt.q.lum@hawaii.gov	96813
5	Christine Sakuda		csakuda@transformhawaii.gov	96806
6	Crystal Yamasaki	Crystal Clear Communications	crystalclearcomms@gmail.com	96817
7	Daniel C. Smith		smithdan@hawaii.edu	96782
8	David Miyashiro	HawaiiKidsCAN	david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org	96734
9	Debbie A Cabebe	MEO	debbie.cabebe@meo-inc.org	96793
10	Deborah Bond-Upson	LearningBond.org	deborah@learningbond.org	96734
11	Dennis Teranishi	PICHTR	dennis.teranishi@pichtr.org	96814
12	Heather Kimball		Heather.Kimball@HawaiiCounty.gov	96781
13	Jacqui Hoover	Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference	jacqui_hlpc@yahoo.com	96743
14	Jacqui L Hoover	Hawaii Island Economic Development Board	jhoover@hiedb.org	96743
15	Jared Grugett	Hawaii Dialogix Telecom	jgrugett@hawaiiid.com	96819
16	Jeanne Skog	Economic Development Alliance of Hawai'i	jskog@skograsmussen.com	96793
17	Jenifer Sunrise Winter		jwinter@hawaii.edu	96821
18	John Reppun		jreppun@keyproject.org	96744
19	Katie Hendrickson	Code.org	katie@code.org	45701
20	Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD	University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine	lbuencon@hawaii.edu	96813
21	Lihla Noori		Lihla.noori@gmail.com	96730
22	Lorna Takehara Strand		lorna.strand@gmail.com	96701
23	Lynn Otaguro	O'ahu County Democrats Digital Equity Committee	lmotaguro@yahoo.com	96821
24	Mark Iha	Tangent Systems	mark@tangent.systems	96813
25	Olu Campbell	Kamehameha Schools	bocampbe@ksbe.edu	96813
26	Philip Bossert	Hawaii Association of Independent Schools	pbossert@hais.us	96817
27	Pono Shim	Oahu Economic Development Board	pshim@oedb.biz	96813
28	Rina Nagashima		rina.nagashima@gmail.com	96822
28	Robert Uyehara	Hawaiian Electric	robert.uyehara@hawaiianelectric.com	96813
29	Sandy Baz		bazsandy@gmail.com	96732
30	Sarah Milianta-Laffin		s.milianta@gmail.com	96707
31	Stacey Aldrich	Hawaii State Public Library System	stacey.aldrich@librarieshawaii.org	96825
32	Susan Tai		susantaikaneko@gmail.com	96814
33	Tharon LeBlanc	Michaels Management	tbleblanc@tmo.com	96819
34	Tony Velasco		tvelasco@honolulu.gov	96782



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ALLIANCE OF HAWAII

House Committee on Economic Development

Date: March 23, 2021
Time: 10:15a.m.
Where: Via Videoconference
Conference Room 312

RE: **HCR 161 / HR 137, SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI**

Aloha mai e Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt, and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii (EDAH), please accept this testimony in support of **HCR 161 / HR 137** to support and adopt the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration for Hawaii adopted by the Broadband Hui.

EDAH strongly supports the importance of increasing Hawai'i's digital capacity, thereby supporting the continuity of social connections, education, employment, and access to other essential services throughout the pandemic. In collaboration with organizations such as the Broadband Hui, we have supported broadband infrastructure development in rural communities, provided digital devices for students and families, supported the accessibility of telehealth, provided information on low-cost internet options, and adopted a Digital Equity Declaration to set a vision and goals for a more equitable digital future.

Looking to that future, much work remains ahead. It will take an ongoing commitment and collaboration from public and private partners to deliver on the goals set forth to address Hawai'i's digital inequities and to leverage the opportunities enabled by improved digital access.

We recognize this resolution supports the aspirational goals of the Broadband Hui Digital Equity Declaration and we believe that addressing digital inequity through broadband access, digital literacy, and digitally-enabled societal systems is one of our greatest opportunities for economic and social recovery, diversification, and resilience.

Again, we kindly request you **PASS HCR 161 / HR 137**.

Mahalo for your consideration,

*Jeanne Skog, EDAH Board Chair
Principal, Skog Rasmussen LLC*

*Pono Shim, EDAH Board Vice Chair
President and CEO, Oahu Economic Development Board*

HCR-161

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 2:51:20 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/23/2021 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelley Withy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HCR161

Digital Equity

Through the COVID Pandemic, we have found the divide between those who can access online resources and those who cannot is enormous. I have participated with the Broadband Hui in developing and reviewing the Digital Equity Declaration and I as that you support it.

I am working with Hawaii State Rural Health Association and Hawaiian Hope to meet the telehealth challenges identified below for 1,000 homes, but it is going to need all of us working together to solve this problem!!

Challenge	Intervention	Research measures
Connectivity	Hot spots provided if needed to maximize access to the internet	Change in the number of successful visits. The number of patients with better control of medical conditions. Decrease overdose and suicide ED and admissions.
Training	Pairs of outreach workers/CHWs visit each home	Change in the number of successful visits. The number of patients with better control of medical conditions. Patient input on training and ease of use.

Equipment	Tablets provided with simple software to facilitate access to the internet and telehealth providers	Change in the number of successful visits. The number of patients with better control of medical conditions.
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Thank you for your consideration, Kelley Withy