



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

Date: 03/03/2021

Time: 10:35 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means
Senate Judiciary

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: SB 0913, SD1 RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE ELECTRONICS
MANAGEMENT.

Purpose of Bill: Requires persons who receive state funds and state financial assistance to donate unnecessary but functioning electronic devices, hardware, and televisions to nonprofit organizations that will refurbish and distribute them to eligible persons in the State. Sets reporting requirements for donating entities, nonprofit refurbishers, and the department of accounting and general services. Sets administrative penalties for violations. Effective 5/1/2029. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 913, SD1 requiring recipients of state funds and financial assistance to donate unnecessary but functional electronic devices, hardware, and televisions for refurbishment and distribution to eligible person in the State.

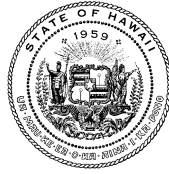
Access to devices and technology resources for low-income families and other populations in need of access is a long-standing issue. The issue became more evident with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic which required the people of the state to work and learn remotely. The Department appreciates that this measure recognizes the need for access to technology resources by proposing a cost-efficient solution that is also sustainable and environmentally responsible.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

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.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CURT T. OTAGURO
COMPTROLLER
AUDREY HIDANO
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF
CURT T. OTAGURO, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS/JUDICIARY

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021, 10:35 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

S.B. 913, S.D. 1

RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE ELECTRONICS MANAGEMENT.

Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Keith-Agaran and Keohokalole, and members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 913, S.D. 1.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) appreciates the intent to promote electronics stewardship and reduce electronic waste in the State by requiring all persons who receive state financial assistance to donate unnecessary but functioning electronic devices to nonprofit organizations that will refurbish and distribute them to eligible persons in the State. The DAGS would like to offer the following **comments**:

The setting of operational rules and monitoring requirements over private, non-profit and non-government organizations is not within the DAGS scope of authority. The Department of Health (DOH) or the Department of Human Services (DHS) are in a better position to determine which non-profits receive financial assistance since they operate programs that service this community niche.

In addition, there is an operational component that is unfunded to staff this program which includes moving equipment from offices to a staging area for pick up. The challenge

becomes logistics if the expectation is to centralize pick up. If interested non-profits coordinate their own pick up of unnecessary/functioning technology from departments, this may be a better solution for the State to reduce costs and for non-profits to acquire unnecessary/functioning electronic devices.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Testimony for SB913 - RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE ELECTRONICS MANAGEMENT

Position : **Support.**

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Curtis Kropar, Executive Director of the non profit organization, Hawaiian Hope Org.

My Testimony is broken up into 3 parts :

- 1) Introductions and background on current efforts.
- 2) Amendment comments.
- 3) Supporting arguments, statistics and photos.

1) Introductions and background on current efforts :

As you may know, Hawaiian Hope Org has been refurbishing computers in Hawaii for 14 years now. We take in donated computers, fix them up and redistribute them to local families, other non profit organizations, schools and even lend out hardware to various agencies. In 2020, we lent truckloads of hardware to the Department of Labor (DoL) for the Unemployment call center at the convention center, at no cost to the state. We also use our refurbishing project as an opportunity and train our volunteers, interns and enthusiasts how to be computer techs with real hands on experience to build their skills. And finally, we partner with other agencies and groups throughout the state of Hawaii in order to get these fully tested and refurbished computers into the hands of people that need them.

To our knowledge, Hawaiian Hope Org is the single largest refurbisher of computers in the state.

In 2018 we produced over 1,000 computers,
and, in 2019 we produced over 1,800 computers.

With this bill, SB913, we, other non profit organizations, and ultimately families in Hawaii, will now have the opportunity to get access to a much larger quantity of computers from the state. These computers are otherwise often discarded as eWaste. We estimate this to be over 40,000 devices a year. We appreciate your efforts to pass this bill and get these computers to the people that need them.

With the current laws, there is no mandate for reuse first, and there should be. As this bill states on line 9, "***preventing waste in the first place is preferable to any waste management option.***" Often state agencies are not aware of the option for donating hardware for reuse, and instead refer to all methods of discarding computers as "eWaste" or "recycling." The current law was enacted after the findings of a 2012 "*Hawaii Electric Device Recycling Task Force*" was recommended to the legislature. All calls and recommendations for "reuse first" were ignored during the task force, and instead the primary focus was "recycling." I know this as, I was one of the 90+ participants of this task force, the lone voice promoting "reuse" and was far outnumbered by the various representatives of recycling agencies nation wide. Recycling is NOT reuse. And, as no one in Hawaii "recycles" devices, all recycled devices are shipped out of state and instead represent a massive waste of educational resources to the people of Hawaii.

In addition, enacting this bill will ultimately save the state money !

Currently, when discarding these devices there is often a disposal fee assessed. The fee is based on the weight of the equipment being discarded. One vendor we know of on Oahu charges \$0.40 cents per pound to trash (recycle) perfectly working hardware. Another vendor we are aware of, in Hilo on the big island, "Mr K's Recycle & Redemption Center" states on their website, they charge \$.95 cents per pound, and additionally charge \$3 per mile for picking up discarded devices. As a single pallet of computers may weigh over 1,000 pounds, this can become very expensive, very quickly.

ReUse first is the most logical conclusion for taking electronics devices out of the waste stream, and instead getting them to the people in Hawaii that need them.

- **It will provide more educational resources directly to families.**
- **It will better promote a culture of good stewardship of resources.**
- **It will save the state money.**

2) Amendment comments :

SB913 has a companion bill , HB516. The two bills were pretty much identical until the last committee, where a line was inserted in SB913 on page 7, Line 6 to apply the bill only to counties with a population of more than 750,000. Other than this change, both bills are for the most part identical with minor technical language.

As the goal of this bill is to help give reusable hardware a 2nd life in the community that paid for it, we support this effort state wide, not just on Oahu.

One of the early testifiers for this hearing on SB913_SD1 takes a position of opposition to the bill. This testifier however is located on Kauai. If the bill passes as written, it would exempt Kauai from the requirements of better electronics stewardship.

One particular note that the testifier seems to overlook, is that the entire intent of this bill is to prevent eWaste to begin with, and instead repurpose hardware that still has life left in it and to reuse it. Therefore "contracting with a mainland recycler" as they suggest is the exact opposite of what this bill intends to accomplish for local reuse, and getting hardware into the hands of local families that need it.

3) Supporting arguments, statistics and photos :

While reuse of computers is an option, it is not common knowledge with state agencies. We have found, if we do not deliberately go out of our way to intercept "eWaste" computers, many of the otherwise perfectly working state computers get scrapped as eWaste recycling.

We also recognize that some state agencies may in fact need access to computer hardware. As an example, we provided several truckloads of hardware to the Department of Labor to help with the temporary Unemployment Office set up at the convention center. In addition to our hardware, they pulled hardware from several other departments as well. Likewise, I am sure some schools would appreciate more computer hardware, if it fits their requirements. With this said, we would support a "first right of refusal" from state agencies and schools, including charter schools, to fill their needs first from computer hardware that may otherwise be deemed as "eWaste."

While we would support this first right of refusal, it is our observation however, that many of the DoE schools are in fact moving away from "computers" and instead switching over to chrome books. This is evident in 2 different observations.

1. In 2020 the DoE placed orders for over 35,000 chrome books. This represents roughly 20% of the student body for the DoE, in addition to the number of chrome books already in place.
2. We participate in eWaste collection events as part of the "Aloha Aina Recycling Drives." These events are held primarily at DoE schools. We have been participating in these events since 2018 and have collected literally thousands of laptops from the schools and other government agencies. We are only one collector and typically only get the laptops. Most of the hardware instead goes to a eWaste recycler. If we were not there to deliberately intercept these laptops, they would instead be going to an eWaste processor.
 - **The total collected in just 2 schools years was over 100 tons of electronics**
 - 2017-2018 : 105,230 lbs with an average of ~6,000lbs collected per event
 - 2018-2019 : 98,517lbs with an average of ~5,500lbs collected per event

This past Saturday, Feb 13th, we participated in an Aloha Aina Recycling Drive. The below photos are a PORTION of the hardware we collected at this event, almost all of it from schools.

In total, we collected over 1,000 laptops **at this ONE event.**



Non Profits and computer donations :

Regarding this bill, SB913, it was brought to our attention that other non profits would like computers too. **We agree !** However there is a point that many people overlook when trying to donate computers to various non profits. This is the fact that most non profits, especially the smaller ones that really need hardware, do not have any IT staff. They can not afford to pay dedicated IT personnel. Yes, the non profits want computers, but they want fully working computers. Most non profits will not take "donations" of computers because these donations will almost always need some type of refurbishing, updates, upgrades or repair work. This is why so many non profits will transfer computers they receive as donations over to us. They provide us with computers that were given to them, or they no longer want. Likewise, we have provided dozens of non profits computer hardware over the years.

SB913 is what will ensure this process makes the best use of hardware, **locally**, and promoting a more thorough stewardship of the resources available to all of us that live in the state.

Thank you !

We are available to answer any questions you may have.

SB-913-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 2:09:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2021 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

It seems this would add a layer of bureaucracy to eWaste disposal. I don't think there's enough refurbishers on any of the islands to take in or even assess all the eWaste generated by covered entities. O'ahu, might have more refurbishers, but they also have much more electronics. If the State were to setup a contract with a large refurbisher/eWaste recycler in the mainland to facilitate the refurbishment that would streamline the process, but having folks individually setup drop off eWaste for refurbishment with companies that will be quickly overwhelmed is creating a problem where there isn't one now. I believe this will cause confusion on Kaua'i, reduce the amount of material properly recycled, and cause a hardship for covered entities that have no outlet for refurbishment or recycling if the bill were to pass.

The State should set something up to make it easy for people to participate, not mandate folks do something that's infeasible.

SB-913-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 4:29:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2021 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

Please support SB913.

Thank you,

Andrea Quinn

SB-913-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 7:05:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2021 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members of the WAM and JDC Committees,

Thank you for hearing SB913 SD1 relating to sustainable electronics management. Our waste system is in dire need of an overhaul to better utilize existing programs and initiatives to reduce and reuse items. Electronics are a major source of unnecessary waste, Hawaiian Hope and initiatives like it to refurbish and reuse electronics that can be given to individuals who might otherwise not have access to expensive, yet critical tools like laptops and smart phones. Please pass this bill for the betterment of sustainable waste and towards a more circular waste system.

Mahalo,

Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe