WHEREAS, the Internet serves as an essential tool in the dissemination of news and other vital information; and

WHEREAS, local news organizations provide an important service and offer audiences invaluable access to critical information through their online publications; and

WHEREAS, user comments, blogs, chat rooms, and other public forums provide the users of online publications with a public forum in which they may offer points of view, comments, and criticism, which are a valuable and necessary component of our society; and

WHEREAS, access to public forums on online publications should be available to every person who agrees to the news organizations' comment posting guidelines; and

WHEREAS, comment posting guidelines should encourage the free exchange of ideas and discourage libelous statements; and

WHEREAS, to encourage users of all ages to participate in public forums on online publications, news organizations should diligently enforce their established guidelines on the posting of comments in public forums; and

WHEREAS, in particular, news organizations should diligently enforce guidelines that govern the following areas: comments that are threatening or designed to incite violence; the use of explicit or disguised profanity; the use of profane or crude names and identities; and potentially libelous statements; now, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that local news organizations are encouraged to diligently enforce comment posting guidelines on their online publications; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, who in turn is requested to transmit copies to the Presidents and Publishers of The Honolulu Advertiser and the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, the General Managers of KHNL, KGMB, and KFVE, and the Presidents and General Managers of KITV and KHON.

OFFERED BY:  

MAR 10 2010