HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING CONGRESS TO RECOGNIZE THE INCREASING STATE-LEVEL OPPOSITION TO THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION'S REPEAL OF NET NEUTRALITY AND TO IMMEDIATELY ACT TO RESTORE NET NEUTRALITY REGULATIONS.

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Federal Communications Commission adopted net neutrality regulations to protect internet users and ensure all content over the Internet was treated equally and without preferential treatment; and

WHEREAS, however, in 2017, the Federal Communications Commission voted to repeal net neutrality regulations despite heavy opposition by net neutrality supporters who argued the deregulation would allow internet service providers the opportunity to limit or prioritize certain access to information at their discretion; and

WHEREAS, in February 2018, Hawaii Governor David Ige signed an executive order that required all state agencies to obtain their internet-related services from internet service providers who agree to abide by net neutrality principles; and

WHEREAS, Governor Ige has joined governors from Montana, New York, New Jersey, and Vermont in signing executive orders on protecting net neutrality principles; and

WHEREAS, in March 2018, Washington became the first state to pass a law making it illegal for internet service providers to manipulate their networks for money, while dozens of other states are considering similar measures through legislation and lawsuits; and

WHEREAS, in context of the repeal of net neutrality regulations set to take effect on April 23, 2018, it is in the State's interest to explore the possibility of establishing a state-owned public utility company to provide high-speed
broadband internet service, similar to municipalities such as Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Sandy, Oregon, which have had success with public companies providing internet service; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that it is essential to ensure that people can access websites and information freely and fairly over the Internet; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018, that Congress is urged to recognize the increasing state-level opposition to the Federal Communications Commission's repeal of net neutrality and to immediately act to restore net neutrality regulations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs is requested to study the costs and benefits to the State to supply high-speed broadband internet service through a state-owned public utility company; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs is requested to submit a report of findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2019; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President Pro Tempore, Majority Leader, and Minority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker, Majority Leader, and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, Hawaii's Congressional Delegation, Chairperson of the Federal Communications Commission, the respective Governors and presiding officers of the legislative bodies of each of the other forty-nine states, the Governor, and the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

OFFERED BY:  

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