REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS TO REVIEW THE EXISTING RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF SCREEN TIME AND MEDIA CONSUMPTION ON CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' PHYSICAL, COGNITIVE, AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH.

WHEREAS, it is becoming increasingly common for the children of Hawaii, and the United States more generally, to be exposed to screens, including smartphones, tablets, computers, and televisions, for many hours every day at ever-younger ages; and

WHEREAS, occupational therapists report increasing rates of a wide range of developmental delays among young children exposed to substantial amounts of screen time; and

WHEREAS, researchers from Stanford, Harvard, Princeton, and elsewhere have found correlations between excessive screen time and obesity, attention issues, poor inter-personal skills, and strained parent-child relationships; and

WHEREAS, anecdotal accounts from teachers consistently report that "digital native" children give up more quickly when solving problems, have shorter attention spans, have less physical dexterity, and demonstrate impaired capacity for deep play, creativity, and thought; and

WHEREAS, in its 2018 guidelines, the California Department of Public Health encourages people, especially children, to limit their cell phone exposure due to potential negative effects on memory and learning; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization just classified videogame addiction as a disease and researchers from Iowa State University found nearly one in ten gamers have pathological playing patterns; and

WHEREAS, addictions started in adolescence are much harder to overcome and, according to Common Sense Media, fifty percent
of teenagers say they are addicted to their phones, with sixty percent of their parents agreeing; and

WHEREAS, researchers at the University of Maryland found that students exhibited withdrawal, cravings, and anxiety after giving up all media for less than twenty-four hours; and

WHEREAS, San Diego State University researcher Jean Twenge has linked growing smartphone penetration among teens to their deteriorating mental health, finding teens who consume more than three hours of screen time a day show a pronounced increase in their likelihood of exhibiting a suicide risk; and

WHEREAS, smartphone penetration among teens reached fifty percent in 2012; and

WHEREAS, between 2007 and 2015, suicide deaths among teenage girls doubled and suicide deaths among teenage boys rose thirty percent, and suicide deaths now make up two-thirds of all gun deaths; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Institute of Mental Health, mental health issues are now the number one cause of disability for United States workers; and

WHEREAS, major investors in Apple, including the California Teacher Retirement System, recently called on Apple to study the impacts of smartphones and tablets on children because of the growing body of research; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of high-level tech executives and ex-tech executives are expressing guilt and concern about the impact their companies are having on children and society; and

WHEREAS, China, South Korea, and Taiwan have enacted legislation and programs that aim to limit screen time among children and teens to a healthy level, including public health campaigns, tax-funded counseling, and mandatory classes for children and parents; and
WHEREAS, the State Department of Health's mission is to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs is to uphold fairness and public confidence in the marketplace, promote sound consumer practices, and increase knowledge, opportunity, and justice in our community; and

WHEREAS, children are the future leaders of society and the most valuable asset and society has a moral obligation to protect them; 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 the Department of Health and Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs are requested to review the existing research on the impact of screen time and media consumption on children's and adolescents' physical, cognitive, and emotional health, as well as policies other states and countries have implemented to address this issue; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, is requested to submit a report of its 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 the report is requested to include:

(1) The key points from existing research, including which effects linked to screens are most concerning, as well as the overall assessment of the importance and urgency of this issue;

(2) A list of policies other states and countries have instituted, including but not limited to public health campaigns, mandatory classes for parents and children, and counseling, and an assessment of their
appropriate for Hawaii, as well as any novel policy ideas;

(3) Plans for future Department of Health and Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs action to address this issue; and

(4) An explanation of the division of responsibility between the Department of Health and Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs regarding this issue; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

OFFERED BY:

MAR - 8 2018