

MAR 12 2021

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# SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING TO FORM A WORKING GROUP AND DEVELOP A PLAN FOR OUTREACH TO KUPUNA TO REMEDIATE A LACK OF DIGITAL LITERACY, BROADBAND ACCESS, AND COMPUTER EQUIPMENT.

1           WHEREAS, access to broadband connectivity is a foundation  
2 for improved economic growth, job creation, global  
3 competitiveness, and a better way of life; and  
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5           WHEREAS, in March 2020, the coronavirus disease 2019  
6 (COVID-19) was detected in the State, upending all that  
7 residents knew as normal; in response, the Governor was joined  
8 by the mayors of all four counties in mandating restrictions and  
9 policies on operations, travel between the islands, and work-  
10 from-home policies; and  
11

12           WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic and its broad, adverse  
13 economic impact underscored that improved access to broadband  
14 services across all communities in Hawaii would enhance economic  
15 development, education, healthcare, public safety, and emergency  
16 services in those communities; and  
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18           WHEREAS, broadband connectivity was once considered a  
19 luxury commodity, but the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated  
20 that stable internet access is a necessity for a productive,  
21 modern life and a lifeline in the event of an emergency; and  
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23           WHEREAS, thousands of residents in the State were forced to  
24 function from their homes and rely on the quality of their  
25 internet connections for access to virtual communications; and  
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27           WHEREAS, having basic technical capabilities in digital  
28 literacy is a necessity to access the potential of broadband  
29 connectivity and the internet; and  
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31           WHEREAS, members of our community, such as our kupuna,  
32 homeless population, and recently released prisoners, often lack  
33 the digital skills necessary to fully utilize newer, current  
34 technologies to discover career and other social support



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1 opportunities, which may be found online and are especially  
2 critical during the COVID-19 pandemic; and  
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4 WHEREAS, kupuna are eager for opportunities to learn about  
5 technologies that would facilitate their aging independently,  
6 have a desire to understand and control their data (as privacy  
7 is also important to them), and it is estimated that more than  
8 half of people sixty-five years or older are smartphone owners;  
9 and  
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11 WHEREAS, the rapid and constant advancement of technology  
12 often makes older adults unsure of their ability to use it,  
13 which can leave them unmotivated and lacking in the self-  
14 confidence to utilize technology in their everyday life; and  
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16 WHEREAS, the Executive Office on Aging (EOA) is the  
17 designated lead agency in the coordination of a statewide system  
18 of aging and caregiver support services in the State; now,  
19 therefore,  
20

21 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first  
22 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021,  
23 that the EOA is encouraged to study and identify the number of  
24 kupuna in the State who struggle with digital literacy, lack  
25 broadband access, and lack computer equipment; and  
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the EOA is encouraged to form a  
28 working group to develop a plan for outreach to kupuna to  
29 remediate a lack of digital literacy, and to develop a  
30 curriculum to increase digital literacy among Hawai'i's kupuna  
31 community; provided that it is also requested that the Director  
32 of the EOA, or their designee, lead the working group, and it is  
33 suggested that the group consist of other governmental agencies,  
34 organizations, and subject matter experts; and  
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the EOA is urged to partner  
37 with nonprofit groups that work toward increasing digital  
38 literacy and access for kupuna and other unserved or underserved  
39 communities; and  
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41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the EOA is requested to submit  
42 a report of its findings and plan for remediation, including any



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1 proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty  
2 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2023; and  
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
5 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor and Director of the  
6 Executive Office on Aging.  
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9

OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bennett J. Musick", written over a horizontal line.