

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 362

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 18 2021

RE: S.B. No. 947
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2021
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred S.B. No. 947 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO A BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY OFFICE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish the Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office within the Office of the Governor; and
- (2) Appropriate funds for the establishment and staffing for the Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; Department of Human Services; Department of Transportation; Department of Health; Office of the Mayor of the County of Maui; AARP Hawai'i; Hawaii Primary Care Association; two individuals; and a petition consisting of twenty-eight organizations and eleven individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from Mahana Weddings Maui and eighteen individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Keep Your Power Hawaii, and twenty-six individuals.



Your Committee finds that the development of broadband technology is vital to the well-being of the State's residents and communities. For example, these technologies bring opportunities for direct access to education and healthcare for rural residents who are otherwise forced to travel long distances for educational courses and medical treatment, allow farmers to gain real-time access to vital information such as crop prices or weather forecasts, and empower small businesses to expand their access to markets. This measure will establish a Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office to broaden access to these vital technologies throughout the State.

Your Committee also notes that several testifiers expressed concerns about the potential negative health impacts associated with certain types of wireless broadband technologies, and that consideration of the evidence supporting these concerns may merit further discussion as this measure proceeds in the legislative process.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Establishing the Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism instead of the Office of the Governor;
- (2) Removing the general fund appropriation for the creation and staffing of the Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Government Operations that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 947, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 947, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Government
Operations,



SHARON MORIWAKI, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-First Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Government Operations
GVO

Bill / Resolution No.:* SB 947	Committee Referral: GVO, WAM	Date: 2/11/21
--	--	-------------------------

The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
 If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312
 Pass, with amendments 2311
 Hold 2310
 Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
MORIWAKI, Sharon Y. (C)	/			
DELA CRUZ, Donovan M. (VC)	/			
CHANG, Stanley	/			
GABBARD, Mike	/			
FEVELLA, Kurt				/
TOTAL	4			1

Recommendation:
 Adopted
 Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:


Distribution:
 Original
 Yellow
 Pink
 Goldenrod
 File with Committee Report
 Clerk's Office
 Drafting Agency
 Committee File Copy

*Only one measure per Record of Votes