

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16, 2024

RE: H.B. No. 2359
H.D. 2

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred H.B. No. 2359, H.D. 1, entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish the Digital Equity Grant Program to award grants to deploy digital equity projects to covered populations in the State.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism; Disability and Communication Access Board; one member of the Kaua'i County Council; Chamber of Commerce Hawaii; Hawai'i Primary Care Association; AARP Hawai'i; Hawaiian Telcom; Kapolei Chamber of Commerce; Broadband Hui; and Maui Chamber of Commerce. Your Committee received comments on this measure from Charter Communications.

Your Committee finds that the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic brought to light the need for digital equity throughout the State. Your Committee further finds that the federal government has identified having robust broadband infrastructure as a priority and has dedicated funding for digital equity



programs across the country. This measure would establish a program to provide grants for the optimal use of expected federal funding, thereby allowing the State to improve adoption of broadband services by underserved residents so they can access essential services and fully participate in society, democracy, and the economy.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting a definition for "broadband infrastructure";
- (2) Specifying that projects that include the deployment of broadband infrastructure are ineligible for a grant under the Digital Equity Grant Program; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2359, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2359, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce,



MARK M. NAKASHIMA, Chair



State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
The Thirty-second Legislature

HSR 589-24

Record of Votes of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Bill/Resolution No.: HB2359 HD1	Committee Referral: HET, CPC, FIN	Date: 02-14-24		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
CPC Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. NAKASHIMA, Mark M. (C)	/			
2. SAYAMA, Jackson D. (VC)	/			
3. AMATO, Terez	/			
4. BELATTI, Della Au	/			
5. HASHEM, Mark J.				/
6. HUSSEY-BURDICK, Natalia				/
7. GATES, Cedric Asuega				/
8. LOWEN, Nicole E.				/
9. ONISHI, Richard H.K.	/			
10. TAM, Adrian K.				/
11. PIERICK, Elijah			/	
TOTAL (11)	5		1	5
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: 				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				