



## HCR161 HD2

### SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Ikehу, ka Ho‘omohala Waiwai, a me ka ‘Oihana Ho‘okipa Malihini

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

‘Apelila 12, 2021

3:00 p.m.

Lumi 224

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HCR161 HD2, which would urge the adoption of the goals set forth in the Equity Declaration put forth by the Broadband Hui. The Equity Declaration’s vision of **access, literacy** and **livelihood** for all communities through digital equity will be of particular benefit to many Native Hawaiian communities who may face significant disparities in access to broadband service and digital devices.

**OHA recognizes that many Native Hawaiians and Native Hawaiian communities may struggle with a lack of access to reliable and affordable broadband service, which may place them at a significant socioeconomic disadvantage, and perpetuate barriers to critical programs and services** including in the areas of healthcare, education, and emergency response. For example, OHA notes that Native Hawaiians are highly represented in our rural communities: based on 2010 Census data, Native Hawaiians comprised the overwhelming majority of those living in Waimānalo, O‘ahu (81.3%); Kualapu‘u, Moloka‘i (71.9%); Nānākuli, O‘ahu (71.5%); ‘Ualapu‘e, Moloka‘i (70.6%); Maunaloa, Moloka‘i (67.3%) and Hāna, Maui (65.9%).<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, the Federal Communications Commission’s 2018 Broadband Deployment Report indicated significant gaps in broadband access between Hawai‘i’s urban and rural areas, with only 63.1% of our rural population having access to the standard 25 Mbps download/3Mbps upload for fixed broadband access, compared to 98.5% of our urban population.<sup>2</sup> This disparity in broadband access between rural and urban areas has left our majority Native Hawaiian rural communities technologically and economically isolated and competitively disadvantaged.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Native Hawaiian Data Book, <http://www.ohadatabook.com/> (last accessed March 15, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> FCC, 2018 BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT REPORT, APPENDIX F2, available at <https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/reports/broadband-progress-reports/2018-broadband-deployment-report>.

In addition, digital inequities for Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders may be particularly concerning in the education context. For example, only 51% of Hawai'i residents have access to affordable broadband plans;<sup>3</sup> meanwhile, Native Hawaiian students may be disproportionately represented among the 49% of residents who do not have access to affordable broadband, given the high representation of Native Hawaiians in rural communities, and the lower median household income for Native Hawaiians (\$75,708) compared to the total state population (\$80,212).<sup>4</sup> The shift of our public education system to virtual learning suggests that this lack of access to affordable broadband may particularly impact the education of Native Hawaiian students. Moreover, a survey from the Department of Education (DOE) has further indicated that “[s]tudents identifying as Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders are far less likely to have sufficient devices for distance learning,”<sup>5</sup> again suggesting that a disproportionate number of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders may have been left behind in the DOE’s transition to virtual learning.

**The Declaration for Digital Equity reflects and aligns with OHA’s concerns regarding the need for greater digital equity for the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.** Indeed, as the COVID-19 pandemic has further heightened the demand for reliable, affordable internet connectivity with work, education, civic engagement, and healthcare services being shifted online, the need to address the inequality in broadband access has become even more urgent. Addressing current and future inequality in internet and digital devices, as envisioned in the Declaration, will mitigate the disproportionate impacts of digital inequities on Native Hawaiians.

Accordingly, OHA respectfully urges this Committee to **PASS HCR161 HD2**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

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<sup>3</sup> Broadband Now, *The State of Broadband in Hawaii*, <https://broadbandnow.com/Hawaii> (last accessed Mar. 20, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, ISSUE BRIEF: COVID-19 AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN COMMUNITIES 3 available at [https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Issue-Brief.-Covid-19\\_corrected.pdf](https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Issue-Brief.-Covid-19_corrected.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TEACHER AND STUDENT DISTANCE-LEARNING SURVEY (2020), available at <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/Preliminary%20Summary%20of%20Findings%20for%20Teacher%20and%20Student%20Distance%20Learning%20Survey.pdf>.



## DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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Statement of  
**MIKE MCCARTNEY**  
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Monday, April 12, 2021

3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 244

In consideration of

**HCR161, HD2**

### SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) **supports HCR161, HD2** that supports and adopts the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration for Hawaii adopted by the Broadband Hui.

The COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the need for broadband infrastructure and digital equity across all of Hawaii's residents especially those in rural unserved and underserved communities.

It is important that we recognize the work that is being done by the community stakeholders in the Broadband Hui as we strive to meet the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

DR. CHRISTINA M. KISHIMOTO  
SUPERINTENDENT



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 04/12/2021

**Time:** 03:00 PM

**Location:** CR 224 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Resolution:** HCR 0161, HD2 SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HCR 161, HD2 and respectfully offers the following comments:

While the Department appreciates Government Goal 1, which states, “By 2025, all government services available to the public are made accessible online through a single government portal, unless in-person interaction is otherwise necessary,” there are certain services and information that parents/guardians may need to access for their child that requires Department-issued login credentials to information or parent portals due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the information, as well as for compliance with federal privacy laws. Therefore, although it would be possible to inform parents/guardians visiting the government portal of where to go to get information, they would be redirected to the appropriate Department information site or portal to access any services or information on their child.

While the Department appreciates Education Goal 1, which states, “By 2030, all students have the opportunity to participate in in-person, online, and hybrid learning,” Department strategic goals and planning, as well as additions/amendments to curriculum policy, will need review and approval by the Board of Education. In addition, consistent and sustainable funding would be necessary for the Department to provide a diverse array of pedagogical approaches, including distance learning, blended learning and in-person learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in

every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).

# TRANSFORM HAWAI'I GOVERNMENT

Every Citizen • Every Service • Every Island

April 12, 2021

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM  
Via Conference Room 224 & Videoconference  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony supporting HCR 161 HD2

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and committee members:

My name is Christine Sakuda and I serve as the executive director of Transform Hawai'i Government (THG), a coalition of organizations and individuals who advocate for an accessible, accountable and responsive state government that leverages technology to help citizens, communities, and businesses throughout Hawai'i to thrive. We provide a consistent and persistent voice to keep modernization a top priority of state government.

THG supports House Concurrent Resolution 161, HD2 which is supporting and adopting the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration that was adopted by the Broadband Hui.

THG has made long-term investments in promoting efficient and effective digital government in Hawai'i. Adopting the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration is integral to fulfilling the Hawaii Information Technology Strategic Plan, which we played a role in helping to initiate. We believe that the resolution is an important step toward meeting the objectives of the plan. We have also played a role in helping to convene the members of the Broadband Hui and wish to continue to serve as a resource to it and to the legislature.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it abundantly clear that improvements can be made in the way government serves its citizens and that technology is an important part of improving access to government services. We believe that now is the time to commit to developing long-term vision, goals, and objectives to fast forward the economic and social recovery in a way that creates new opportunities well beyond the challenges we face today. Please favorably consider House Concurrent Resolution 161 HD2.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony supporting this resolution.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Sakuda  
Executive Director  
Transform Hawai'i Government  
email: [csakuda@TransformHawaiiGov.org](mailto:csakuda@TransformHawaiiGov.org) | phone: (808) 321-2811  
web: [www.TransformHawaiiGov.org](http://www.TransformHawaiiGov.org)



**HPCA**

HAWAII PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism**  
**Monday, April 12, 2021; 3:00 p.m.**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 224**  
**Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 161, HOUSE DRAFT 2, SUPPORTING AND  
ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII  
ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI.**

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Concurrent Resolution No. 161, House Draft 1, and House Resolution No. 137, House Draft 2.

The resolution, as received by your Committee, would support and adopt the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration that was adopted by the Broadband Hui.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

Hawaii has long been at the forefront of integrating newer technologies into daily life. One example of this is Hawaii's Telehealth Law which has served as a model across the United States. Yet, it was only after COVID struck our islands that this law became fully integrated into daily life.

Today, it is common practice to ZOOM or SKYPE with your health practitioner instead of physically going to the provider's office for a visit. When COVID first hit our islands, many health providers had to limit the number of patients that could be serviced in-person because of a scarcity of Personal Protective Equipment, restrictions in the gatherings of groups, and the need for changes to the physical arrangement of examination rooms and other diagnostic facilities.

**Testimony on House Concurrent Resolution No. 161, House Draft 2**

**Monday, April 12, 2021; 3:00 p.m.**

**Page 2**

For people with adequate broadband access, telehealth was a lifeline for the provision of essential primary health care services. Yet, health care facilities in rural areas experienced the same problems when COVID hit. They too had to limit the number of patients they could see. But because these communities lacked adequate broadband access, they were effectively cut off from primary care. Many were forced to bear their maladies until it became necessary to go to the emergency room.

The Governor's suspension of a statute that prohibits the use of standard telephonic service in telehealth has temporarily eased this inequity. For those without adequate broadband, at least for now, they are able to obtain basic primary care services over landline telephones. But that is neither adequate, tenable, nor fair to the thousands of citizens who lack broadband access.

Because of this, the HPCA views the lack of broadband access in rural areas as an issue of social equity. In this day and age, everyone should have equal access to health care. Telehealth was envisioned as the means of leveling the field between urban and rural areas. The lack of broadband ensures that urban and rural communities remain unequal.

As a member of the Broadband Hui, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or [eabe@hawaiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiipca.net).



## Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Date: April 12, 2021  
 Time: 3:00 p.m.  
 Where: Via Videoconference  
             Conference Room 224

### **RE: HCR161 / HR137, SUPPORTING AND ADOPTING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN THE DIGITAL EQUITY DECLARATION FOR HAWAII ADOPTED BY THE BROADBAND HUI**

Aloha mai e Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and Committee Members,

The listed organizations and individuals **SUPPORT HCR161 (HR137)**, to support and adopt the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration for Hawaii adopted by the Broadband Hui.

Over the past year, our organizations have collaborated, each within their own ability, to increase Hawai‘i’s digital capacity, thereby supporting the continuity of social connections, education, employment, and access to other essential services throughout the pandemic. Through the work of the Broadband Hui, we have supported broadband infrastructure development in rural communities, provided digital devices for students and families, supported the accessibility of telehealth, provided information on low-cost internet options, and adopted a Digital Equity Declaration to set a vision and goals for a more equitable digital future.

Looking to that future, much work remains ahead. It will take an ongoing commitment and collaboration from public and private partners to deliver on the goals set forth to address Hawai‘i’s digital inequities and to leverage the opportunities enabled by improved digital access.

We recognize this resolution supports the aspirational goals of the Broadband Hui Digital Equity Declaration and we believe that addressing digital inequity through broadband access, digital literacy, and digitally-enabled societal systems is one of our greatest opportunities for economic and social recovery, diversification, and resilience.

For these reasons, we kindly request you **PASS HCR161 (HR137)**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

(Please see names on the following page.)

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Zip</b>
1	Allicyn Tasaka	Hawaii Workforce Development Council	Allicyn.h.tasaka@hawaii.gov	96813
2	Barbara Tom	Waipahu Safe Haven Immigrant/ Migrant Resource Center	barbara.yukie@gmail.com	96701
3	Brad Kaleo Bennett	Auamo Collaborative	kaleobennett@gmail.com	96720
4	Burt Lum	State of HI Department of Business Economic Development Tourism	burt.q.lum@hawaii.gov	96813
5	Crystal Yamasaki	Crystal Clear Communications	crystalclearcomms@gmail.com	96817
6	Daniel C. Smith		smithdan@hawaii.edu	96782
7	David Miyashiro	HawaiiKidsCAN	david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org	96734
8	Debbie A Cabebe	MEO	debbie.cabebe@meoinc.org	96793
9	Deborah Bond-Upson	LearningBond.org	deborah@learningbond.org	96734
10	Dennis Teranishi	PICHTR	dennis.teranishi@pichtr.org	96814
11	Heather Kimball		Heather.Kimball@Hawaiicounty.gov	96781
	Hunter Heaivilin		hunter@supersistence.org	96822
12	Jacqui Hoover	Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference	jacqui_hlpc@yahoo.com	96743
13	Jacqui L Hoover	Hawaii Island Economic Development Board	jhoover@hiedb.org	96743
14	Jared Grugett	Hawaii Dialogix Telecom	jgrugett@hawaiidt.com	96819
15	Jeanne Skog	Economic Development Alliance of Hawai`i	jskog@skograsmussen.com	96793
16	Jenifer Sunrise Winter		jwinter@hawaii.edu	96821
17	Jill Takasaki Canfield	Hawaii Literacy, Inc	jill.takasaki.canfield@hawaiiliteracy.org	96817
18	John Reppun		jreppun@keyproject.org	96744
19	Katie Hendrickson	Code.org	katie@code.org	45701
20	Kelley Withy		kelleywithy@gmail.com	96734
21	Kendrick Farm		farmk@hawaii.edu	
22	Laura Kay Rand	Hawaii Foodbank	mailto:LKRand@hawaiifoodbank.org	96819
23	Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD	University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine	lbuенcon@hawaii.edu	96813
24	Lihla Noori		Lihla.noori@gmail.com	96730
25	Lindsay Ah Loo	Nakupuna Foundation	lahloo@nakupuna.org	96819
26	Lorna Takehara Strand		lorna.strand@gmail.com	96701
27	Lynn Otaguro	O'ahu County Democrats Digital Equity Committee	Imotaguro@yahoo.com	96821
28	Mark Iha	Tangent Systems	mark@tangent.systems	96813
29	Dr. Mary Therese Perez Hattori		maryhattori@gmail.com	96821
30	Melissa Unemori Hampe	Skog Rasmussen LLC	mhampe@skograsmussen.com	96793
31	Niniaukape`ali`i Kawaihae	Dept of Hawaiian Home Lands	Niniau.Kawaihae@hawaii.gov	96707
32	Olu Campbell	Kamehameha Schools	bocampbe@ksbe.edu	96813
33	Philip Bossert	Hawaii Association of Independent Schools	pbossert@hais.us	96817
34	Pono Shim	Oahu Economic Development Board	pshim@oedb.biz	96813

35	Rachel Solemsaas	Hawai'i Community College	rsolems@hawaii.edu	96720
36	Ramona K Mullahey		ramonamullahey@hawaiiantel.net	96813
37	Rina Nagashima		rina.nagashima@gmail.com	96822
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39	Sandy Baz		bazsandy@gmail.com	96732
40	Sarah Milianta-Laffin		s.milianta@gmail.com	96707
41	Sean Taketa McLaughlin	Hawaii Consumers	seantaketa@gmail.com	96817
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43	Stacey Aldrich	Hawaii State Public Library System	stacey.aldrich@librarieshawaii.org	96825
44	Susan Tai		susantaikaneko@gmail.com	96814
45	Tharon LeBlanc	Michaels Management	tleblanc@tmo.com	96819
46	Tony Velasco		tvelasco@honolulu.gov	96782

**HCR-161-HD-2**

Submitted on: 4/9/2021 1:31:49 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynn Otaguro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

April 9, 2021

Testimony in support of HCR161 HD2, Supporting and Adopting the Goals Set Forth in the Digital Equity Declaration for Hawaii Adopted by the Broadband Hui

Honorable Chair Wakai and members of the Committee:

In the past year, we have seen the importance of digital access and literacy, as COVID-19 shut down many in person services and it became critical to be able to use the internet. We also have seen the large gaps in access, raising concerns that some in our state are unable to receive essential services and fully participate in our communities.

The Digital Equity Declaration adopted by the Broadband Hui sets forth a vision for addressing that gap and goals for digital access, literacy, and livelihood, to enable our communities to grow and thrive. Please support this vision and goals and vote to adopt this resolution.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Otaguro  
Oahu, Hawaii

**HCR-161-HD-2**

Submitted on: 4/10/2021 10:42:56 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Colleen Rost-Banik	Individual	Oppose	No

## Comments:

Aloha. My name is Colleen Rost-Banik. I am a resident of Honolulu, an education scholar, and a lecturer within the University of Hawai'i System.

While I appreciate *some* of the spirit behind the Broadband Hui, I am deeply concerned about the ramifications of supporting the Digital Equity Declaration. First, it assumes that everyone has a home through which they would be able to access the internet. There is no concern in the Declaration for our houseless or transient neighbors and their ability to participate digitally. Second, the declaration seems to prioritize digital access over in-person engagement. This is particularly troubling in the Digital Equity Declaration's goal for education, which states, "**By 2030, all students have the opportunity to participate in in-person, online, and hybrid learning.**"

While I support the general impetus to make the digital classroom and learning experience accessible to all, **I am deeply concerned about the urge to prioritize online learning at the expense of in-person education. The ramifications of this goal are enormous** as it would undoubtedly shift education spending priorities to value online infrastructure over training, hiring, and retaining qualified teachers and other personnel. More importantly, research has shown that low-income students, students with special needs, and ethnically minoritized students are unquestionably negatively impacted by online learning. The academic, social, and emotional development of students across the board has been shown to have been compromised by exclusively attending online schooling.

Please do not pass this resolution without **amending** the Digital Equity Declaration. One option for amending the Declaration to more appropriately meet educational equity aims would be to change the education goal to read "All students have internet access as a supplement to in-person instruction."

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Colleen Rost-Banik, PhD

**HCR-161-HD-2**

Submitted on: 4/10/2021 12:57:38 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
noel kent	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

This is a good bill and seeks to equalize access to learning opportunities, but it must be amended no to privilege internet education at the expense of in-person education. In-person is uniquely valuable. Noel Kent Professor Emeritus UH Manoa

**LATE**

**HCR-161-HD-2**

Submitted on: 4/11/2021 3:32:09 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Waynele Yu	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Senator Wakai, Senator Misalucha and the Energy, Economic Development and Tourism Committee,

I am writing to submit testimony on HCR 161. I am asking that the legislature only support this bill if the goal for education in the Digital Equity Declaration for Hawai'i can be amended. While I am in support of ensuring all Hawai'i residents have equal access to the internet and that online learning experiences must be accessible to all, I am concerned about the way this declaration may be used to prioritize online learning at the expense of in-person instruction. Research has shown that low-income students, students with special needs, and ethnically minoritized students are negatively impacted by online learning (Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice, 2021). I am concerned that the current language would shift spending priorities to value online infrastructure over training, hiring, and retaining qualified teachers and other personnel. We saw the dangers of this when the HI DOE purchased Acellus this school year instead of investing in and utilizing current teachers for online instruction. Because continuing on this path would ultimately be detrimental for students, I am asking that the legislature only support this bill only if the goal for education is amended to read, "All students have internet access as a supplement to in-person instruction." Or alternatively, the goal for education is removed.

I am an instructor at the University of Hawai'i-MĀnoa College of Education teaching in a distance program that supports students in becoming licensed teachers across the state. I am an advocate of online learning because it creates access for students. Many of our teacher candidates would not be able to pursue their degrees if they had to move to O'ahu in order to do our program. I am, however, aware of multiple challenges of online instruction. My research centers on students' sense of place in online classrooms as a way to address feelings of isolation (Olt, 2018; Ragusa & Crampton, 2018) and even othering (Phirangee & Malec, 2017) in online settings. We must be especially careful about online learning in K-12 settings. Young students need opportunities to interact with each other and their teachers in person. The pandemic has shown us how exclusive online learning is detrimental to the academic, social and emotional development of all students.

Thank you for your consideration.

Waynele Yu

**LATE**

**HCR-161-HD-2**

Submitted on: 4/12/2021 12:01:31 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alethea Serna	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

I am an education professor for the University of Manoa, College of Education. I am also affiliated with the Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice (HSESJ).

I oppose the education goal of this bill. Although the intention of this Digital declaration is good, the goal listed for education that states, "By 2030, all students have the opportunity to participate in in-person, online, and hybrid learning" may cause funds to support online learning at the expense of funding in-person learning. This is unfair and furthers the inequities among those students who are from disparate populations. Research has shown that low-income students, students with special needs, and ethnically minoritized students are unquestionably negatively impacted by online learning. The academic, social, and emotional development of students across the board has been shown to have been compromised by exclusively attending online schooling.

I am requesting the legislature support this bill **ONLY IF** the goal for education is amended or completely taken out. The goal for education should be amended to read: "All students have internet access as a supplement to in-person instruction."

I hope that you highly consider what my colleagues are advising for the sake of the youth and families of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Alethea Serna

**LATE**

**HCR-161-HD-2**

Submitted on: 4/12/2021 9:00:57 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tracy Trevorow	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am concerned that this bill will result in diverting funds away from supporting face-to-face instruction and teacher development. Requiring the State to guarantee access to online options is likley to detract from what has been established as more effective way to learn--through relationships with teachers in a classroom/school environment. Certainly, there will be anecdotal evidence of how specific students were helped by remote access technologies. This is good for the few that cannot make it to a school campus.

I recommend taking out the language that requires by 2030, all students have the opportunity to participate in in-person, online, and hybrid learning. It sounds laudable on first glance but will likley undermine teacher-student and student-student realtionships and learning. There may also be a financial incentives for businesses and not educators to promote this legislation.

Mahalo for considering my position.

-Tracy



ALOHA CARE

LATE

To: The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Bennette E. Misalucha Vice-Chair  
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Date: Monday April 12, 2021 at 3PM

From: Peggy Mierzwa, Sr. Public Policy Analyst, AlohaCare

RE: **HCR161 HD2, Relating to Broadband Service Infrastructure Support**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HCR161 HD2**, which would have the legislature support and adopt the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration adopted by the Broadband Hui. These goals include access to affordable and quality broadband for all, ensuring all residents have a baseline digital competency and that our society is able to leverage digital opportunities to improve the lives of all of our residents.

Founded in 1994, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving 73,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. We are the only non-profit Hawai'i health plan exclusively serving Medicaid patients. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating access to quality healthcare for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person care, including access to housing and food security, to build a stronger, healthier Hawaii.

AlohaCare supports the expansion of reliable broadband statewide as well as ensuring people have the digital literacy to effectively use online access. The past year has illustrated the need for us to connect with people in nontraditional ways. In rural settings or other unconnected areas, it is a challenge to ensure people are able to access the healthcare they need in order to either maintain health or address health concerns. Our kupuna also struggle to navigate the online systems in order to make and access appointments independently, including those appointments for Covid vaccinations.

The problems extend beyond telehealth. People were unable to adequately work or learn from home over the course of the past year because of either poor connectivity or lack of the ability to utilize the online systems. Access to these necessities are integral to a person's overall well-being as well as their ability to feel connected in various ways to their community.

The Broadband Hui is made of stakeholders from a variety of sectors. They have come together to ensure that all of our communities are able to access broadband and understand how to utilize online systems. This work is integral for the well-being of individuals, families and our state.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HCR161 HD2.