



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MIKE MCCARTNEY
DIRECTOR

CHUNG I. CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
MIKE MCCARTNEY
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Monday, March 29, 2021

3:10 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of

SCR88 / SR67

**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 SCR88/SR67** 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.



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

Date: 03/29/2021

Time: 03:10 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: SCR 0088 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 SCR 88, 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.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
Monday, March 29, 2021; 3:10 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 224
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 088/SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 067,
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** Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 088 and Senate Resolution No. 067.

The resolutions, 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 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 088/Senate Resolution No. 067
Monday, March 29, 2021; 3:10 p.m.
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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 these resolutions.

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@hawaiiipca.net.



ALOHACARE

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

Date: Monday, March 29, 2021 at 3:10 PM

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

RE: **SCR88/SR67 Supporting and Adopting the Goals Set Forth in the Digital Equity Declaration for Hawaii Adopted by the Broadband Hui-Support**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of **SCR88/SR67**, 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 SCR88/SR67.

TRANSFORM
HAWAI'I GOVERNMENT
Every Citizen • Every Service • Every Island

March 29, 2021

LATE

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Bennette Misalucha, Vice Chair
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND TOURISM

Via Videoconference
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony supporting SCR 88 and SR 67

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 Senate Concurrent Resolution 88 and Senate Resolution 67 which are 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 Senate Concurrent Resolution 88 and Senate Resolution 67.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony supporting these resolutions.

Respectfully submitted,



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

LATE

SCR-88

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 7:14:52 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/29/2021 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Colby Takeda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Digital equity is critical to building healthier, happier communities!

LATE

SCR-88

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 9:23:11 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/29/2021 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

March 29, 2021

Testimony in support of SCR88/SR 67 HD1, 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