

JAN 22 2021

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC HOUSING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that public housing
2 communities disproportionately lack broadband and digital equity
3 and access to quality educational opportunities and healthcare
4 services. This disparity has been exacerbated by the
5 coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, as school, work,
6 and healthcare have shifted to online distance learning,
7 telecommuting, and telehealth, respectively. The lack of
8 broadband and digital equity may cause school children to drop
9 out of school due their inability to participate in distance
10 learning activities or complete homework assignments for which
11 an internet connection is required. The legislature further
12 finds that because distance learning is likely to continue
13 through 2021 and possibly into 2022, a continued lack of
14 broadband and digital equity in the State will expand
15 educational disparities throughout the State.

16 The legislature notes that Virginia has implemented
17 initiatives to increase access to broadband internet statewide,



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1 including the more rural areas of Virginia. Similarly, the
2 legislature believes that an important first step for Hawaii to
3 expand broadband access to all residents of the State is to
4 improve the internet speeds and connection quality provided to
5 the residents of the Kuhio Park Terrace and Puuwai Momi public
6 housing complexes. Currently, in the Kuhio Park Terrace public
7 housing complex, which comprises two, sixteen-story towers, the
8 ground floors of the complex are able to access the internet
9 while some higher floors cannot.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
11 Hawaii public housing authority to establish a pilot program to
12 ensure that all housing units in the Kuhio Park Terrace and
13 Puuwai Momi public housing complexes are provided with
14 sufficient internet speeds and connection quality.

15 SECTION 2. (a) The Hawaii public housing authority shall
16 establish a pilot program to ensure that the internet speeds and
17 connection quality throughout each housing unit in the Kuhio
18 Park Terrace and Puuwai Momi public housing complexes are
19 sufficient for school children to participate in distance
20 learning activities without negatively impacting the use of the
21 internet by other residents.



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1 (b) The Hawaii public housing authority shall contract
2 with one or more private entities to install any necessary
3 upgrades to the Kuhio Park Terrace and Puuwai Momi public
4 housing complexes' internet infrastructures; provided that the
5 Hawaii public housing authority shall issue a separate contract
6 for installation at each complex; provided further that any
7 contract executed in accordance with this Act shall be exempt
8 from chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

9 (c) The Hawaii public housing authority shall submit a
10 report to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
11 convening of the regular session of 2023, which shall include:

- 12 (1) An assessment of the pilot program, including:
- 13 (A) Whether the pilot program was successful in
14 extending access to broadband internet to all
15 school children and residents at Kuhio Park
16 Terrace and Puuwai Momi public housing complexes;
 - 17 (B) An assessment of the speed and quality of the
18 broadband infrastructure installed at each
19 complex; and
 - 20 (C) The number of school children and residents who
21 benefitted from the pilot program;



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1 (2) An assessment of the feasibility of extending the
2 pilot program to other public housing complexes
3 statewide; and

4 (3) Any other findings and recommendations, including any
5 proposed legislation.

6 (d) As used in this Act, "school children" means children
7 attending public or private schools in grades kindergarten
8 through twelve and residing in either the Kuhio Park Terrace or
9 Puuwai Momi public housing complexes.

10 (e) The pilot program shall cease to exist on June 30,
11 2023.

12 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
14 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 and
15 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
16 year 2022-2023 to be deposited into the public housing revolving
17 fund.

18 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the public housing
19 revolving fund the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may
20 be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 and the same sum or so
21 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for



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1 the Hawaii public housing authority to contract with one or more
2 private entities to install any necessary upgrades to the Kuhio
3 Park Terrace and Puuwai Momi public housing complexes' internet
4 infrastructures.

5 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii
6 public housing authority for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

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INTRODUCED BY:



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



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Report Title:

HPHA; Public Housing; Internet; Pilot Program; Distance Learning; Kuhio Park Terrace; Puuwai Momi; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Hawaii Public Housing Authority to establish a pilot program to ensure that all housing units in the Kuhio Park Terrace and Puuwai Momi public housing complexes are provided with sufficient internet speeds and connection quality. Appropriates moneys.

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