

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

216

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 2023

RE: S.B. No. 1231  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,  
to which was referred S.B. No. 1231 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO DIGITAL EQUITY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to identify and address remaining obstacles to digital equity to all areas of the State by establishing the Digital Equity Grant Program. By awarding grants the State seeks to create a condition in which all individuals and communities in the State have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in society, democracy, and the economy.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; University of Hawai'i System; Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission; Broadband Hui; Kapolei Chamber of Commerce; Hawaiian Telcom; Charter Communications; and four individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Civil Beat Law Center for the Public Interest. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of Information Practices and Society of Professional Journalists.

Your Committee finds that the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic spotlighted the need for digital equity for all of



Hawaii's residents. The federal Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act recognized the importance of digital equity and created several programs, including the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program. The Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program provides a one-year period for the development of the statewide digital equity plan before the National Telecommunications and Information Administration will issue their notice of funding opportunity for the capacity grants. Your Committee believes that providing funding opportunities in advance of the anticipated National Telecommunications and Information Administration's State Digital Equity Capacity Grant program will accelerate the delivery of digital equity and literacy benefits to local communities. This measure will help to fund and build information technology to provide digital capacity in Hawaii's communities by establishing the Digital Equity Grant Program to award grants and create a condition in which all individuals and communities in the State have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in society, democracy, and the economy.

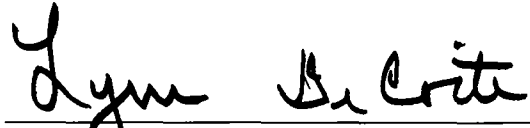
Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language defining "broadband infrastructure";
- (2) Removing language that would have exempted "commercially sensitive information" from disclosure, due to existing Uniform Information Practices Act protections; and
- (3) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purpose of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1231, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1231, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Energy, Economic  
Development, and Tourism,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
LYNN DECOITE, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Second Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism**  
**EET**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 1231</b>	Committee Referral: <b>EET, WAM</b>	Date: <b>2/7/23</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
<b>Members</b>	<b>Aye</b>	<b>Aye (WR)</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Excused</b>
DECOITE, Lynn (C)	✓			
WAKAI, Glenn (VC)	✓			
FUKUNAGA, Carol	✓			
KIM, Donna Mercado	✓			
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original File with Committee Report             Yellow Clerk's Office             Pink Drafting Agency             Goldenrod Committee File Copy				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes