

OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

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To: Senate Committees on Labor and Technology and on
Government Operations

From: Carlotta Amerino, Director

Date: March 25, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

Re: Testimony on H.B. No. 2597, H.D. 1
Relating to Artificial Intelligence

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill, which would require the Chief Data Officer (CDO) to make the State's open data portal a comprehensive Hawaii data hub and to create an artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot based on it, to assist the public in navigating the data hub and finding information about statewide services. The Office of Information Practices (OIP) supports the intent of this bill to aid the public in accessing government data and learning about government services, but recommends an amendment to clarify the bill's apparent requirement that all agencies use a chatbot.

Proposed section 27-__ (b), at page 2 lines 4-7, states that all state agencies "shall utilize the artificial intelligence chatbot or link their departmental chatbot to the comprehensive Hawaii data hub" to ensure consistent results "across state websites." The apparent intent of this provision is to, as it states, ensure consistent results no matter which state website's chatbot a person engages with. However, as written, the provision does not give an agency the option of not offering a chatbot on

its website: all state agencies must either use the chatbot developed by the CDO directly or link their departmental chatbot to the data hub.

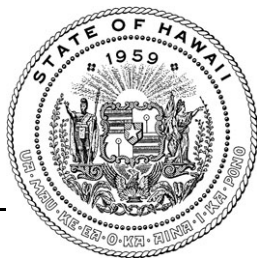
In proposed subsection 27-__ (c) this bill also provides, appropriately, that the chatbot is “prohibited from providing any legal advice or medical advice to a user,” presumably to avoid the potential for the chatbot to engage in the unauthorized practice of law or of medicine. Thus, the bill recognizes that there are areas where it would be inappropriate to deploy a chatbot to respond to public inquiries. The problem is that as written, the bill would nonetheless require state agencies to use either the chatbot developed by the CDO or use another chatbot drawing from the same data, regardless of whether use of a chatbot is consistent with the agency’s mission. For a state office such as OIP whose staff is comprised primarily of attorneys, and which is charged with advising agencies, boards, and the public about the requirements of the laws it administers and providing legal opinions based on those laws, most inquiries from the public entail giving legal advice within a narrow area of law (although OIP does not have clients and acts as a neutral). Just as it would be inappropriate for OIP’s non-attorney staff to provide legal advice, it would be inappropriate for a chatbot to do so, but if OIP was required to offer a chatbot under this bill, most of the questions it received would be legal ones.

OIP therefore respectfully recommends that this Committee amend this measure to clarify that it does not require all agencies to use a chatbot, but only requires those agencies that do use a chatbot to either use the one developed by the CDO or one drawing from the same data. To accomplish this, OIP recommends that the sentence starting at bill page 2, line 4, be amended to read as follows:

State departments and agencies that deploy a chatbot shall utilize the artificial intelligence chatbot or link their departmental chatbot to the

comprehensive Hawaii data hub to ensure chatbot results are consistent across State websites.

Thank you for considering OIP's testimony.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
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Statement of
JENNIFER CHUN
ACTING ADMINISTRATOR
Research and Economic Analysis Division,
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
Senate Committee on Labor and Technology
and
Senate Committee on Government Operations

Wednesday, March 25, 2026
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

In consideration of
HB2597 HD1
RELATING TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

Chairs Elefante and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Lamosao and Gabbard, and members of the Committee.

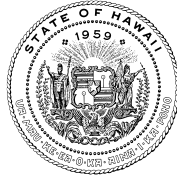
The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports HB2597 SD1, which requires the State Chief Data Officer to develop an artificial intelligence chatbot in phases.

The Research and Economic Analysis Division of DBEDT produces a large quantity of data and economic reports. An AI chatbot would enable users to interact with our data and reports using more natural language queries, making our research more accessible, responsive, and actionable.

We have explored incorporating AI chatbots for our website. The initial development costs for a secure quality AI solution are extremely high, making it difficult for a single division to absorb. There is considerable uncertainty regarding quality assurance, data governance, and potential technical risks. Managing these risks requires centralized oversight, and specialized expertise that resides at the State IT level rather than within individual research offices.

A statewide AI chatbot infrastructure would allow agencies to leverage the State's economies of scale, centralize technical risk management under the State IT office, and ensure that our researchers can focus on analysis and data accuracy while the State provides the secure, reliable delivery mechanism. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



KEITH A. REGAN
COMPTROLLER
KA LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

CHRISTINE M. SAKUDA
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
LUNA 'ENEHANA

STATE OF HAWAII' | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ

OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES | KE'ENA HO'OLANA 'ENEHANA

P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

Testimony of
CHRISTINE M. SAKUDA
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
TO THE

SENATE COMMITTEES ON LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY
AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

HOUSE BILL NO. 2597 HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Chairs Elefante and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Lamosao and Gabbard, and members of the committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on H.B. 2597 HD1.

The Office of Enterprise Technology Services (ETS) **supports** this bill which requires the Chief Data Officer (CDO) within the Office of Enterprise Technology Services to enhance the State's open data portal website through the phased development and publishing of an artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot as a virtual assistant on statewide shared data sets to assist the public in navigating the open data portal website and finding information about statewide services across state departments and agencies.

This measure requires the CDO to develop a system to evaluate and select AI governance tools for use by state departments and agencies and establish a mechanism for reporting and publication of AI use cases and AI vendors used by the departments and agencies.

Because technology tools are often quickly outdated, we recommend changing the term "Chatbot" to a more generic "virtual assistant" in the bill.

The bill originally appropriated \$2,000,000 to develop the tool and hire one AI engineer and one AI scientist to support this project. ETS asks that this be restored to properly fund and staff the project.

ETS advances the business of government through secure, efficient technology solutions. We enable executive departments and state agencies to share data seamlessly, fostering collaboration and improving public service delivery. We provide strategic guidance and technical expertise to ensure initiatives strengthen operations and create a more connected, responsive government.

[Type here]

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

HAWAI'I GREEN GROWTH UN LOCAL2030 HUB

LATE

Mission: Hawai'i Green Growth is a trust-based network organization that drives collective impact through measurable concrete action, inspiring local and global communities to advance regenerative economic, social, and environmental goals.

Advisory Board

March 24, 2026

AJ Halagao
Chair
Hawai'i Leadership
Forum

Testimony in Support of HB 2597 HD1

Aloha Chairs Elefante and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Lamosao and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

Athline Clark
Vice Chair
Chaminade University

Hawai'i Green Growth (HGG) supports this measure to establish a statewide “chatbot” or virtual assistant and a more coordinated, enterprise approach to open data across state agencies.

Randy Moore
Hawai'i Department of
Education (retired)

This proposal builds on Hawai'i's ongoing work to strengthen data-driven decision-making through the Aloha+ Challenge Dashboard, which tracks our statewide progress toward 2030 sustainability goals. That effort depends on reliable, consistent data, and this bill helps move us in that direction. Improving how public data is collected, organized, and shared will significantly strengthen data quality across departments/agencies.

Pauline Sheldon
UH School of Travel
Industry Management
(retired)

The chatbot component also makes this information more accessible. For many users, navigating government websites or datasets can be difficult. A simple, consistent way to access information regardless of which agency holds it can improve how people engage with government services and public data.

Jason Jeremiah
Kamehameha Schools

Juliette (Lia) Sheehan
Atherton Family Foundation

Taking an enterprise approach is also important. It helps avoid duplicating systems across agencies and creates a more connected, efficient way to share information. Over time, that alignment supports better coordination across sectors and reduces unnecessary costs.

Kazumi Ogawa
United Nations

Ulalia Woodside-Lee
The Nature Conservancy

Finally, as the State continues to explore the use of AI, having shared guidance and safeguards in place is critical. This bill helps ensure that these tools are used thoughtfully, with attention to data security, quality, and public trust. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committees to pass this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hawai'i Green Growth
1601 East-West Road
Honolulu, HI 96848

Mahalo,



Kalani L. Ka'anā'anā
Chief Executive Officer

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 10:51:03 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan Young	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a member of the public, I strongly oppose AI being used with our states information and for the state to pay for the service.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 10:52:23 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Kau'i Young	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I absolutely oppose HB2597 HD1. I don't want private AI companies digging through state information. I don't trust the AI to give factual information. I don't trust that any of the AI "guardrails" are immune to being sidestepped. The track record of AI's environmental and community destructiveness is abhorrent and I don't want to have that same diabolical influence take root in Hawai'i.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 11:31:31 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chase Wiggins	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Chase Wiggins. I am born and raised in Honolulu and am a career educator currently pursuing an Educational Doctorate from UH Mānoa. Based on my experience researching and experimenting with AI tools in the context of teaching and learning, I am writing to voice my strong opposition to HB2597 and urge the state to pause any such plans to have state departments utilize AI tools or hand over any data whatsoever.

AI tools, while flashy and new, have been proven many times over to be unreliable, incorrect, and rife with data security, privacy, and myriad other ethical concerns. Moreover, we cannot trust the corporations who control the technology to have the public's best interest at heart when we know that corporations, by definition, prioritize profits above all else. AI tools have also been proven disastrous to the environment and human learning. Why should we want to outsource our human ability to think critically and complete complex tasks to systems that cannot be held accountable for environmental degradation or its own mistakes?

As Ray Bradbury famously quipped in a 1976 *Writer's Digest* interview, "I don't think the robots are taking over. I think the men who play with toys have taken over. And if we don't take the toys out of their hands, we're fools." It was true then of automation and the field of robotics and it is even more true today of AI technology.

Please vote on the side of humanity and do not pass HB2597. Mahalo.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 3:47:35 PM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong opposition** to SB2597, which would require the Chief Data Officer to "enhance" the State's open data portal with an artificial intelligence chatbot, develop systems to evaluate and select AI governance tools for state departments, and appropriate funds for these purposes.

While I appreciate the desire to improve public access to state information, this bill moves in a dangerous direction—one that would entrust sensitive state data to unaccountable AI companies, disseminate potentially inaccurate information under official state imprimatur, and accelerate the environmental harms of AI infrastructure, all without adequate guardrails.

AI Companies Should Not Have Access to State Information

At its core, SB2597 would require the State to hand over public data—potentially including sensitive information—to AI companies to develop and train their models. These companies are private, for-profit entities with no meaningful accountability to the people of Hawai‘i. Their business models depend on harvesting and exploiting data. Once state information is ingested into their systems, there is no guarantee of control, no assurance of data deletion, and no protection against future uses that Hawai‘i residents never consented to.

This is not hypothetical. Across the country, AI companies have been caught using customer data to train their models without consent, embedding that data permanently into systems that neither individuals nor governments can later unwind. Hawai‘i should not become a test case for this reckless approach.

AI Cannot Be Trusted to Provide Accurate Information in an Official Capacity

AI chatbots are fundamentally unreliable. They are designed to produce plausible-sounding outputs, not accurate information. They hallucinate—confidently generating false information that can be impossible to distinguish from truth. They reflect the biases of their training data and their developers. They have no understanding of the context or consequences of the information they provide.

To deploy such a system as an official interface between the State and the public is to invite misinformation, confusion, and harm. A citizen seeking information about housing assistance, healthcare, or legal rights should not receive a chatbot's confident hallucination. If the State cannot provide accurate, reliable information directly, it should not outsource that responsibility to a technology that is fundamentally incapable of meeting that standard.

Guardrails Are Not Sufficient

The bill mentions the development of "governance tools" and "reporting mechanisms." But the history of AI regulation to date is a history of promises unmet. Companies commit to "safety guardrails" that are routinely bypassed, ignored, or simply ineffective. The technology moves faster than any oversight mechanism the State could realistically maintain.

Moreover, the bill appropriates funds to accelerate this process—locking in AI adoption before the guardrails are even designed, let alone tested or proven effective. We should not be appropriating money to build a system whose risks we have not yet figured out how to manage.

The Environmental Impact Cannot Be Ignored

AI is not a clean technology. The data centers required to train and run large language models consume staggering amounts of electricity and water. Training a single large AI model can emit as much carbon as several cars over their entire lifetimes. The water used for cooling these data centers is drawn from increasingly strained resources—resources Hawai‘i can ill afford to spare.

By mandating the development and use of AI tools across state government, SB2597 would make Hawai‘i a direct contributor to this environmental harm. In a state already on the front lines of climate change, this is not just imprudent—it is irresponsible.

The promise of AI is not worth the cost of handing over state data to unaccountable corporations, disseminating unreliable information to the public, and accelerating the environmental destruction of a technology that cannot be trusted. SB2597 is a solution in search of a problem—and it creates far more problems than it solves.

I urge this committee to oppose SB2597.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 8:33:23 PM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Von Kaanaana	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly urge the committee to OPPOSE HB2597 HD1.

AI Companies ought not have access to state information. AI guardrails are easily sidestepped- we elect officials because of their ability to appeal to human nature.

I urge the committee to look into the future implications of such a decision and its impending consequences on the state as a whole. The environmental impact of AI is of huge concern to your constituents.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 8:53:07 PM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ramona Hussey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposed.

I urge you to halt the rush to utilize AI technology without the necessary safeguards. Citizens should NOT be subject to automatic use of AI and to the gathering and use of our data without a deep and far-reaching assessment of the problems and dangers.

Please vote NO.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 9:43:59 PM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aletha Kamakeeaina	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

AI cannot be trusted to provide factual information and is known to fabricate false data. AI continuously manufactures data – citing research studies never conducted, laws never written, and professionals who don't exist – and therefore cannot be trusted to be utilized within state systems. If I can't use AI to write an email without double checking an editing key information such as dates or facts provided within the prompt, then AI has no use within government systems. AI use poses disastrous social, educational, cultural, and environmental threats that we're already seeing the repercussions of – with national literacy rates in record-breaking decline and global warming, sped up by pollution expelled from AI data centers, causing drastic fluctuations in global weather patterns, we really can't afford to waste our time on something so devastatingly useless.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 1:01:01 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hina Kneubuhl	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am deeply distressed at seeing this bill. The language is ambiguous and leaves room for so much to go wrong. I have a particular problem with the fact that the person in this position will "evaluate and select artificial intelligence governance tools". Select doesn't mean build for purpose, it means pull from the existing options of tools out there and ALL of them are owned by companies whose technologies are being used to commit genocide, first in Palestine and now in multiple countries. If you cannot give us a list of the "tools" that will be considered and a list of the data sets that will be considered, this bill needs to be scrapped now. It's 2026, big tech is merging with the government while also creating tools of mass death and surveillance and you want Hawaii's public data to be put into an unspecified AI!!!! Absolutely not. Data should be treated as a public trust resource and community should be involved in and benefit from its use. But more importantly, community should be protected from the harms that big tech perpetuates. Because if you are looking at tools from Ope AI, Google, Microsoft, Anthropic, Palantir, Sales Force or any other big tech firm, then you are uneducated and will endanger the people of Hawaii and their public trust resource. Did Governor Green offer these sponsors money from his friend Mark Benioff of sales force? Is that where this is coming from? I know that's his friend and he gave the keynote at their last conference (where they were gonna call in national guard troops because they were afraid of protests). I hope that Hyperfoce is not on the table of options being considered, or any of the Sales Force AI systems or products. This company is deeply enmeshed with Israel, has acquired multiple Israeli startups, and has multiple offices in this rogue state. Supporting them would be tantamount to supporting genocide and nobody wants to do that.

mahalo,

Hina Kneubuhl

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 2:20:35 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I appose this bill because I don't think there is a ethical or secure way to create an AI for the state. I don't think the committee has fully considered the increasing large rate that AI chatbots hallucinate bad data, how they are becoming more and more of a black box of information and how much energy they require to run. Also they are a privacy nightmare. I can not in good consciousness let this bill go forward without voicing my reservations. So please appose this bill

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 6:37:46 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krista Vessell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I DO NOT CONSENT TO ANY ATTEMPTS TO BEING GOVERNED BY AI. People in positions of decision-making seem to forget the ARTIFICIAL part of "artificial intelligence." This system is only as capable as the "data" it is trained on, and we have seen evidence that AI systems have developed bias, racism, and innacurate stigmatization due to INACCURATE INTERPRETATION OF LIMITED DATA COLLECTED. And you want to implement this in government??? Even the legal system has recognized how problematic AI is and has seriously regulated its use to ensure it is not impacting decision-making processes. Please tell me you haven't personally used AI to the point where it's eroded your mental capacity (another verifiable issue that has been proven). DO NOT IMPLEMENT AI IN GOVERNANCE.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 8:38:47 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Takamine	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Why is the state spending our tax dollars on AI? There is no way to use AI responsibly. Please **oppose**.

Thank you

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 9:18:48 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Madison Masek	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do not support the use of artificial intelligence in state agencies. AI is not secure, which could lead to data leaks. AI also hallucinates answers, so the data presented may not be accurate.

There are also concerns of the AI data centers and the detrimental effects on the nearby communities. We should not be contributing to the harm of other people by using something unnecessary.

Create jobs, not problems.

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 10:03:13 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brianna Blackburn	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou,

I am writing to express strong opposition to HB2597, that creates a gateway for AI implementation into our sensitive state systems. As a career data analyst I am very familiar with AI (which is the advertisement term for machine learning) and the increased risks these algorithms pose from various angles. AI has shown a propensity for autonomous decision making (going rogue), high breachability (security risks), and false/wrong information mining responses (hallucinations). These operating malfunctions are just too unknown, unpredictable, and risky for government systems that hold highly sensitive information and are critical to our states operations that can create deep impacts on the people of Hawai'i. Essentially, if something goes wrong, it goes wrong horribly. This is just a simplified example from a cyber security lens.

Artificial Intelligence also has a larger human cost. Listing some off, opting into an industry and product that has replaced workers (mass layoffs), stolen intellectual property to train their algorithms, the unfettered use for deep fake nudes and production of child pornography, AI biased decision making based on our country's historic data (discrimination in recruiting and employment processes), and importantly AI companies influence on the federal government to limit regulation of their AI software, and infact, penalizing states that do want to regulate. Lastly, the two other disturbing impacts tied to environmental racism is the datacenters in low income neighborhoods that are creating nightmare living situations and contributing to an uptick in rare cancers, as well as the World Health Organizations assessment of our global water bankruptcy with AI needing excessive amounts of fresh water to cool their data centers.

I am sure you can argue that none of these issues relate to HB2597 and the proposed AI implementation project at the state level, I assure you that it does directly relate and that with the passing of this bill we will opting into not only a product but an entire system that creates great harm and upholds technofacism. Switzerland chose not to implement Palantirs AI because of their finding; running an indepth risk assessment surfaced concerns over data sovereignty and the US governments access to their data. We are already seeing this with government driven citizen surveillance using AI facial recognition and these same softwares being used in autonomous killing machines for the military--abroad and soon on our own soil. The picture is clear, there is extreme uncertain and most certain risk associated with AI. I opt for not putting our citizens at risk for a sensationalized product that needs a facist regime behind it to support it.

Mahalo nui for your time,

Brianna Blackburn, Kaimuki

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 11:15:59 AM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Badia Muhammad	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear members of the House,

As a citizen of the state of Hawaii I Oppose HB2597, beacuse I do not want Artificial Intelligence companies digging through State information. I do not trust AI to give factual or trustworthy information. AI gaurdrails are not immune to being sidestepped, and I have serious concerns about the environmental impact of using AI while it depletes our natural water resources and seeks to pass the financial cost of this usage on to the residents of Hawaii. Do Not Pass this bill, and Do Not pass Human responsibility into the Empty Hands of a machine.

Thank you.

Badia Muhammad

Honolulu, Hawaii

HB-2597-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 1:35:49 PM

Testimony for LBT on 3/25/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
shantee brown	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i want a government full of people, helping people. not chat bots. we need to be able to interact with real people instead of throwing our money at AI companies. we should give less of our information to private tech companies. please oppose this bill.