

JAN 21 2026

---

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

---

RELATING TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMUNICATIONS.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that household emergency  
2 preparedness is a critical element of statewide resilience and  
3 continuity during hurricanes, floods, wildfires, earthquakes,  
4 tsunamis, pandemics, supply chain disruptions, and other  
5 emergencies. The State is geographically remote and faces  
6 heightened risk from delays in external response and support  
7 during major disasters, increasing the importance of household  
8 self-sufficiency and advance readiness.

9       The legislature further finds that the Hawaii emergency  
10 management agency (HIEMA) recommends that households maintain a  
11 fourteen-day supply of essential emergency supplies, including  
12 food, water, and regularly used medications.

13       Only twelve per cent of households statewide appear to meet  
14 the fourteen-day standard. Indeed, household preparedness  
15 varies across counties; estimates of full adherence to the  
16 fourteen-day standard include approximately 11.5% in the City  
17 and County of Honolulu, 19.5% in the County of Hawaii, 8.9% in



1 Maui County, and 8.5% in Kauai County. Also, many households  
2 perceive themselves as prepared while not meeting the  
3 fourteen-day standard, indicating a substantial gap between  
4 perceived preparedness and actual readiness.

5 The legislature further finds that reported barriers to  
6 meeting the fourteen-day standard include limited storage space  
7 and lack of information, among other constraints. Also, limited  
8 public awareness of the fourteen-day standard remains a key  
9 obstacle.

10 The legislature further finds that households that are  
11 aware of HIEMA's updated fourteen-day recommendation and  
12 households that are familiar with general preparedness  
13 guidelines are more likely to be prepared and to comply with  
14 recommended stockpiling for water, food, and medical supplies.

15 The legislature further finds that residents' preferred  
16 channels for receiving preparedness information differ by age  
17 group, supporting the need for a coordinated, multi-channel  
18 communications strategy, including television for older groups  
19 and internet news and social media for younger groups. Research  
20 recommends a statewide multi-media communications plan and  
21 strategy, including television, internet, radio, and mobile



1 applications, to raise public awareness of HIEMA's recommended  
2 fourteen-day supply of household emergency food, water, and  
3 medicine.

4 The purpose of this Act is to strengthen public readiness  
5 by directing HIEMA to develop and implement a comprehensive  
6 communications plan, strategy, and related media assets to  
7 educate and motivate residents to maintain a fourteen-day supply  
8 of food, water, and essential medications, using culturally  
9 appropriate, accessible, and multilingual materials, and to  
10 evaluate and report progress to the legislature.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 127A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
12 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
13 and to read as follows:

14 **"§127A-A Fourteen-day emergency preparedness**  
15 **communications program.** (a) The Hawaii emergency management  
16 agency shall develop and implement a statewide public education  
17 and communications program to increase household preparedness  
18 consistent with the agency's fourteen-day essential supplies  
19 recommendation for food, water, and regularly used medications.

20 (b) The program shall include the development of a  
21 comprehensive communications plan and the creation and



1 dissemination of related media assets. At a minimum, the plan  
2 shall:

3 (1) Identify priority audiences, with attention to  
4 populations disproportionately impacted by disasters,  
5 including but not limited to households with low  
6 incomes, kūpuna, persons with disabilities or access  
7 and functional needs, medically vulnerable  
8 individuals, and communities with limited English  
9 proficiency;

10 (2) Provide clear, actionable guidance on how households  
11 can build and maintain a fourteen-day supply through  
12 phased and affordable steps, including messaging that  
13 supports dignity, practicality, and realistic  
14 household budgeting, and that addresses commonly  
15 reported barriers including limited storage space and  
16 information gaps;

17 (3) Include culturally relevant and multilingual  
18 communications materials appropriate for statewide  
19 use, including in formats accessible to persons with  
20 disabilities;



- 1        (4) Specify and operationalize a statewide multi-media  
2        dissemination strategy, including television, internet  
3        news sites, social media platforms, local radio, and  
4        mobile-based communications, and tailor channel  
5        emphasis to documented age-group preferences;
- 6        (5) Establish a coordinated dissemination schedule for  
7        year-round outreach and targeted outreach during  
8        seasonal risk periods;
- 9        (6) Strengthen and expand practical information pathways  
10       for preparedness guidance, including:
- 11       (A) Maintaining and promoting updated preparedness  
12       content on Hawaii emergency management agency's  
13       website;
- 14       (B) Increasing enrollment in emergency information  
15       updates and alerts;
- 16       (C) Equipping state and county agencies and community  
17       partners with co-branded toolkits to support  
18       diffusion through trusted community ties; and
- 19       (D) Incorporating in-person or virtual informational  
20       meetings as appropriate for priority audiences;  
21       and



1        (7) Include an evaluation framework with measurable  
2        outcomes, including baseline and follow-up measures  
3        of:

4        (A) Public awareness of Hawaii emergency management  
5        agency's fourteen-day recommendation;

6        (B) Familiarity with emergency preparedness  
7        guidelines; and

8        (C) The share of households meeting the fourteen-day  
9        readiness threshold for water, food, and medical  
10       supplies, including the share meeting the  
11       threshold for all essential supplies combined, to  
12       the extent feasible.

13       (c) Media assets developed under this section may include  
14       but shall not be limited to:

15       (1) Public service announcements for radio, television,  
16       and digital platforms;

17       (2) Print-ready and digital graphics, fact sheets,  
18       checklists, and household planning templates;

19       (3) A fourteen-day readiness social media and partner  
20       communications toolkit for organizations and agencies;



1        (4) Short instructional videos and multilingual audio  
2                    content; and

3        (5) Templates that counties, community partners, and state  
4                    agencies may co-brand for consistent statewide  
5                    messaging.

6        (d) The Hawaii emergency management agency may consult and  
7                    coordinate with relevant state and county agencies and community  
8                    partners to implement this section, including but not limited to  
9                    the department of health; The department of education; The  
10                   department of human services; The office of Hawaiian affairs;  
11                   and County emergency management agencies, as appropriate.

12        (e) The Hawaii emergency management agency shall  
13                   incorporate targeted communications that emphasize  
14                   region-specific emergency preparedness recommendations and  
15                   community-based practices, and may implement multimedia  
16                   communications and georeferenced maps to attract public  
17                   attention to the urgent need for households to adhere to Hawaii  
18                   emergency management agency's fourteen-day recommendations;  
19                   provided that outreach should include multilingual strategies  
20                   and community-based information sessions appropriate for  
21                   Hawaii's diverse populations."



1       SECTION 3. (a) The Hawaii emergency management agency  
2 shall submit a report to the legislature on the implementation  
3 and outcomes of this Act no later than twenty days prior to the  
4 convening of each regular session beginning in 2027 and  
5 continuing through 2029.

6       (b) The report shall include, at a minimum:

7       (1) The comprehensive communications plan developed  
8 pursuant to section 127A-A (b), Hawaii Revised  
9 Statutes, including any updates made during the  
10 reporting period;

11       (2) A summary of media assets produced and dissemination  
12 activities conducted, including the channels used and  
13 the frequency and timing of dissemination;

14       (3) A list of partner organizations engaged and the roles  
15 of each partner in dissemination, including use of  
16 co-branded toolkits and informational sessions;

17       (4) Progress measures, including baseline and follow-up  
18 indicators for:

19       (A) Statewide and county-level public awareness of  
20 Hawaii emergency management agency's fourteen-day  
21 essential supplies recommendation;





(B) Familiarity with emergency preparedness

guidelines; and

(C) Statewide and county-level estimates of household

preparedness and compliance relative to the

fourteen-day recommendation for water, food, and

medical supplies, including the share meeting the

fourteen-day threshold for all essential supplies

combined, to the extent feasible;

(5) A summary of barriers to emergency preparedness

identified through evaluation activities and actions

taken to address those barriers;

(6) A description of how messaging and outreach were

targeted or tailored by county or audience segment,

including multilingual and accessibility measures, and

use of region-specific communications tools, if

implemented;

(7) Expenditures of any appropriated funds and any other

resources used to implement this Act; and

(8) Recommendations for sustaining, improving, or

expanding the fourteen-day emergency preparedness

communications program.



1 (c) The Hawaii emergency management agency shall make the  
2 report publicly available on its website no later than ten  
3 business days after submission to the legislature.

4 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
6 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to  
7 implement this Act, including planning, community engagement,  
8 production of media assets, translation and accessibility  
9 services, evaluation, and outreach distribution costs.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii  
11 emergency management agency for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 5. In codifying the new sections added by section  
13 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute  
14 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating  
15 the new sections in this Act.

16 SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

17 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

18  
INTRODUCED BY: Mike Gabbard

# S.B. NO. 2109

**Report Title:**

HIEMA; Emergency Preparedness; Emergency Communications;  
Program; Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to develop and implement a statewide public education and communications program to promote household emergency preparedness consistent with the Agency's fourteen-day essential supplies recommendation. Requires annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

