

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 **"S127A-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;



1 (B) Familiarity with emergency preparedness
2 guidelines; and
3 (C) Statewide and county-level estimates of household
4 preparedness and compliance relative to the
5 fourteen-day recommendation for water, food, and
6 medical supplies, including the share meeting the
7 fourteen-day threshold for all essential supplies
8 combined, to the extent feasible;

9 (5) A summary of barriers to emergency preparedness
10 identified through evaluation activities and actions
11 taken to address those barriers;

12 (6) A description of how messaging and outreach were
13 targeted or tailored by county or audience segment,
14 including multilingual and accessibility measures, and
15 use of region-specific communications tools, if
16 implemented;

17 (7) Expenditures of any appropriated funds and any other
18 resources used to implement this Act; and
19 (8) Recommendations for sustaining, improving, or
20 expanding the fourteen-day emergency preparedness
21 communications program.



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.

