

ACT 232

S.B. NO. 2214

A Bill for an Act Relating to Digital Literacy.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that, according to a 2015 report by the Association of Library Service to Children, library services increasingly center on digital tools and media. In 2015, seventy-five per cent of households owned some form of digital media device. However, guidance and knowledge on the use of digital media are often lacking. Providing parents and children with a deeper understanding of the digital tools available to them is essential to the well-being of families in the twenty-first century.

The legislature further finds that digital literacy skills are crucial for career success in the twenty-first century. According to a Brookings Institution report from 2017, workplaces across the country and globe have undergone a rapid process of digitization. The percentage of workplaces with high levels of digital content has grown dramatically in recent years, while the percentage of workplaces that rely on a lower level of digital content has decreased by a similarly dramatic margin. While digitization offers advantages to digitally literate individuals, it also increases barriers for members of the public who lack digital skills. Increasing digital literacy among members of the public would increase their competitiveness in an economy increasingly defined by the ability to use digital tools.

The purpose of this Act is to increase access to digital tools and promote digital literacy by establishing a digital literacy program to be administered by the board of education through the state librarian.

SECTION 2. Chapter 312, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§312- Digital literacy program. (a) The board of education, through the state librarian, shall:

- (1) Provide for the establishment and ongoing operation of a digital literacy program for the public libraries in the State; and
- (2) Provide coordination and facilitation of the activities of digital literacy service providers and digital literacy programs in the public, private, and volunteer sectors.
- (b) The objectives of the digital literacy program shall be to provide programmatic activities promoting digital learning in the community by providing digital skill building opportunities that aim to improve:
 - (1) Knowledge and skills in digital literacy;
 - (2) Knowledge and skills in the use of digital education tools and platforms; and
 - (3) Knowledge, skills, and the use of digital education tools and platforms to make digital technology accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- (c) The digital literacy program shall not affect existing department of education programs relating to adult education as provided under sections 302A-432 to 302A-435.”

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$75,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the establishment and administration of the digital literacy program established by this Act.

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The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii state public library system for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

(Approved June 30, 2022.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.