

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3366

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR - 5 2006

RE: S.R. No. 53  
S.D. 1

Honorable Robert Bunda  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2006  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Media, Arts, Science, and Technology, to which was referred S.R. No. 53 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS AND THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION TO ADDRESS PUBLIC INTERESTS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS FOR LOCAL MEDIA, INCLUDING NEWS, ACCESS, AND OWNERSHIP,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to urge Congress and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to address Hawaii's unique telecommunications needs by supporting local broadcast, cable, print, and satellite media, and future local news and information applications via broadband telecommunications.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Society of Professional Journalists, Hawaii Chapter; the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 1260; the Honolulu Community-Media Council; the Hawaii State AFL-CIO; the Screen Actors Guild Hawaii; and one concerned private individual. A private individual submitted comments.

A vibrant, independent local media ensures diverse programming and public access to information that reflects local concerns. Recently, local media ownership and control in Hawaii has shifted to large mainland media companies. Mainland media ownership, such as the recent sale of KHON2, leads to a reduction of local news staff. Moreover, mainland media ownership has resulted in a decrease of local programs covering local issues,

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interests, cultures, and arts, and has been replaced with programs lacking a local connection or outreach.

Currently, broadband communications technology has the potential to vastly improve the public's ability to obtain information, communicate, and participate in the democratic process. Moreover, broadband technology can create further opportunities for local expression. Congress, the FCC, and other regulatory agencies are in the process of making important decisions regarding the deployment of this technology that will profoundly affect programming via broadcast radio and television, cable, satellite, print, and the Internet. Congress and the FCC could create a regulatory scheme that favors large corporate media companies, which would in return, deny local communities from the potential benefits of broadband technology.

Your Committee finds that media without a local voice or community involvement serves only large corporate interests, loses the media's ability to engage local communities in the democratic process, and loses programming that reflects Hawaii's history and ethnic and cultural diversity. Local communities will be ignored if meaningful attention is not given to how new and emerging telecommunication technologies will be deployed on the local level. Your Committee urges the FCC to convene a public meeting in Hawaii to consider the roles of local, state, and federal jurisdictions in ensuring the presence of local broadcast, cable, print, and satellite media and to explore the future of local news and information applications via broadband telecommunications.

Your Committee has amended this measure by adding additional language regarding the effects and benefits that new media telecommunication technologies can have for the public. Additional language was also added to clarify the problems Hawaii faces as a result of mainland corporate media companies gaining control and ownership of local media companies.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Media, Arts, Science, and Technology that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.R. No. 53, as amended herein, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as S.R. No. 53, S.D. 1.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Media, Arts,  
Science, and Technology,



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CAROL FUKUNAGA, Chair



