

THE SENATE
TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE 2008
STATE OF HAWAII

LATE

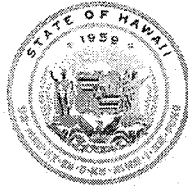
TO: THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING
FROM: PAUL TOMIYASU, Deaf Individual
DATE: 1/31/08

REGARDING: **SB BILL 2053**, ESTABLISHES INTERNET ACCESS FOR THE
DISABLED PROGRAM TO OFFER FREE INTERNET ACCESS
TO INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DISABLED; MAKES
APPROPRIATION.

I am in favor of this measure. Most of the deaf use the T-mobile or Black Berry telephones with text capabilities. We also use a device which needs a service provider like Road Runner to operate. It allows me to see my friends so we can use our language to communicate over the television monitor. In fact, the method where we talk to each other is also used to make calls through an operator who signs to us and calls our family in case we need them or doctor to make appointments. In some states a pilot program was initiated so that emergency hospitals can call interpreters to communicate with deaf people in this same method.

There are many applications for this and can help many who are disabled to communicate, that's why this is a great proposal if we will be able to utilize it in our homes, office, school, library and other public places.

Thank you,



LATE

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
919 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD, ROOM 113
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
January 31, 2008

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing
Twenty-Fourth Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Chun Oakland and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: SB 2053 - RELATING TO SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

The position and views expressed in this testimony do not represent nor reflect the position and views of the Departments of Health and Human Services (DHS).

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities appreciates the Legislature's interest in establishing Internet access for persons who are disabled and offer free Internet access for those individuals. We recognize the value of electronic communication capabilities for individuals with disabilities in broadening their skills and pursuing employment opportunities.

We have the following comments with regard to the bill:

- 1) There is no definition of "individuals with disabilities" or "individuals with varying disabilities." Those terms are very broad, and it is not clear who would qualify for free Internet access.
- 2) It is not known whether Internet access is free for lifetime or for a designated timeframe.
- 3) If an individual does not have an existing phone line, will the provisions of the bill pay for the hook up costs for the phone?
- 4) Will the State be held liable for situations where an individual downloads advertisements and other marketing strategies, and is obligated to pay for the merchandise, or an individual is victim to online predators and electronic enticement?

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland
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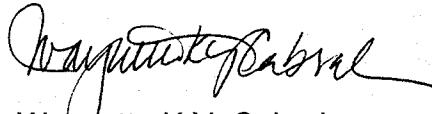
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- 5) Is the State setting precedence for free Internet access to this category of people and not for the elderly, low income, etc.?

The above comments are not meant to present barriers to the passage of the bill but to determine feasibility of implementing the provisions of the bill. We defer to DHS for the financial implications of implementing the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present comments on SB 2053.

Sincerely,



Waynette K.Y. Cabral
Executive Administrator

Francine Aona Kenyon

dba KULI IKE KOKUA

2520 Jasmine Street

Honolulu, HI 96816

frkenyon09@sprintpcs.com

Thursday, January 31, 2008 at 1:30 pm
Conference Room 016

**TESTIMONY
TO
SENTATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING
ON
SB 2053, RELATING TO SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED**

Aloha again!

My name is Francine Kenyon, a long-time advocate and volunteer consultant for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind people of the State of Hawaii, and I wear many hats.

I am opposed to SB 2053, RELATING TO SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED, ESTABLISHING INTERNET ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED PROGRAM TO OFFER FREE INTERNET ACCESS

I believe that people with disabilities are similar to people without disabilities. Some of us have adequate monthly incomes and some do not. If a person is able to pay for computer equipment, they should also be able to pay for their own Internet service. It should not be assumed that because a person has a disability that he or she cannot afford to pay for Internet service similar to anyone else.

It is imperative for us to treat people with disabilities as individuals capable of living independently without having the government provide free services to us because we have a disability.

I urge you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo nui loa for allowing me to testify on this important bill.

Sincerely,

Francine Aona Kenyon
Deaf Advocate & Consultant

LATE

To Rep. Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair, Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair, and the Committee on Human Services and Housing.

Whom it may concerns,

My name is Henry Gosebrink, Independent Living Specialist for the Hawaii Centers for Independent Living and an advocate on behalf of HCIL directors, staff and consumers here in the State Capitol.

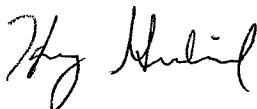
To State legislators, I supported Senate Bill No. 2053 proposed that the internet services should provide the free access to the People with Disabilities because it could help them to free and visible communication with the other people across the Islands, across the Country, and around the world. More Deaf people have used their own videophones that linked to the internet services such as the Time Warner Road Runners, Verizon, and Hawaiian Telecom. The TTY devices are outdated and not have used much than it was in ten or twenty years ago.

Many people with disabilities could not afford the prices of the internet access server because most people have low income and higher costs of living here, and the internet service costs too high.

Please support this bill that what we and other people really needs for our future.

Considering your decision and what better for our people in State of Hawaii,

Henry Gosebrink



January 31, 2008.

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



LILLIAN B. KOLLER, ESQ.
DIRECTOR

HENRY OLIVA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

LATE TESTIMONY

January 31, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: S.B. 2053 – RELATING TO SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED
Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 pm.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to establish Internet access for the disabled program to offer free Internet access to individuals who are disabled..

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill and respectfully requests that its passage does not replace nor adversely impact the priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

The Department recognizes the need for people with disabilities to have access to the Internet in order to access printed information and enhance their communication.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this bill.