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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INFORMATION ACCESS.

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

1           SECTION 1. Thousands of Hawaii residents experience  
2 disabilities such as visual impairments, dyslexia, and physical  
3 impairments that prevent them from directly accessing  
4 conventional print media. Many printed materials are available  
5 through governmental and nonprofit agencies in accessible  
6 formats such as braille, large print, or audio recording.  
7 However, it is generally not practical to provide time-sensitive  
8 information such as a local daily newspaper in these specialized  
9 formats. The legislature finds that even in a media environment  
10 where information is frequently available in multiple formats  
11 that are both portable and widely accessible, telephone-based  
12 audible information access remains an important service for many  
13 individuals.

14           SECTION 2. Chapter 347, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
15 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
16 and to read as follows:

17           "§347-     Telephone-based access to time-sensitive print  
18 media. (a) The vocational rehabilitation and services for the



1 blind division of the department of human services shall ensure  
2 that a telephone-based audible information access service is  
3 available statewide to individuals with visual or other  
4 impairments that limit access to printed media.

5 (b) The division shall investigate the availability of  
6 experienced providers of quality telephone-based audible  
7 information access service and shall award a contract to provide  
8 this service to one or more providers that the vocational  
9 rehabilitation and services for the blind division determines to  
10 be best qualified. In reviewing the qualifications of any  
11 provider or providers, the division shall consider the factors  
12 of cost, quality of services, experience, and any other factors  
13 that the division deems appropriate.

14 (c) The division shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91  
15 to administer a telephone-based audible information access  
16 service, including establishing a mechanism for providing  
17 ongoing funding for the service.

18 (d) As used in this section:

19 "Division" means the vocational rehabilitation and services  
20 for the blind division of the department of human services.

21 "Telephone-based audible information access service" means  
22 the delivery of current daily newspapers and other periodicals



1 in audio format through a telephone call to a local or toll-free  
2 telephone number."

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$80,000 or so much  
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2011-2012 and the  
6 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
7 2012-2013 for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a  
8 telephone-based audible information access service.

9 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the vocational  
10 rehabilitation and services for the blind division of the  
11 department of human services pursuant to the expenditure  
12 authority granted under section 347-10, Hawaii Revised Statutes,  
13 for the purposes of this Act; provided that the appropriations  
14 authorized under this Act shall be expended on a contract for  
15 services with the Hawaii affiliate of a national organization  
16 that:

- 17 (1) Has affiliates in at least all fifty states; and  
18 (2) Provides electronic services that provide blind,  
19 visually impaired, and print disabled persons with  
20 access to newspapers, magazines, and television  
21 listings twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week,  
22 by means of a touch tone telephone, the Internet, or



1           by downloading the electronic information to a digital  
2           talking book player or MP3 playing device.

3           SECTION 4.   New statutory material is underscored.

4           SECTION 5.   This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2011.

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**Report Title:**

Telephone-based Audible Information Access Service; Department of Human Services; Appropriation

**Description:**

Directs the vocational rehabilitation and services for the blind division of the department of human services to contract for a telephone-based service to provide access to timely print media; makes appropriation. (SD1)

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