

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA MCMANAMAN
DIRECTOR

PANKAJ BHANOT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

March 31, 2011

TO: The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 893, S.D.3, H.D. 1 - RELATING TO INFORMATION ACCESS**

Hearing: Thursday, March 31, 2011, 4:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to direct the Disability and Communication Access Board to establish and maintain a telephone-based audible information access service to provide to daily newspapers and other periodicals in an audio medium; makes appropriations from the Wireless Enhanced 911 Fund to the Disability and Communication Access Board Special Fund to establish to the information access service.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill. We defer to the Wireless Enhanced 911 Board and the Department of Accounting and General Services on the fiscal implications of this bill.

Telephone-based audible information access is an important service for many individuals to provide time-sensitive information such as a local daily newspaper. Expanded access for our print-disabled clients is essential through the Newline service for job listings, local and national media information, postings of our public

hearings that solicit commentary on our State Plans and many other important information supportive of our clients to enable them to support themselves through employment and lead quality lives.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide this testimony to this Committee.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 31, 2011

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Senate Bill 893, SD3, HD1 – Relating to Information Access

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports the intent of Senate Bill 893, SD3, HD1 – Relating to Information Access.

While we are willing to accept the administrative responsibility, we urge you to make the following amendments.

- Page 1, line 18 amend to read as follows:

“(a) The state shall provide a telephone-based audible information service...”

While DCAB is willing to administer the monies as requested in (b), we cannot ensure the availability of the service. It would be more appropriate for the Legislature to mandate the state to provide, rather than name a specific agency to ensure, the service. In addition, without further investigation about how the service is provided in other states, DCAB may not be the most appropriate agency in which to house this program for an extended period of time.

- Page 2, replace lines 4 through 9 with:

“(b) The disability and communication access board, subject to the availability of funding, shall award a contract to provide this service to one or more providers that the board determines to be best qualified.”

- Page 2, delete lines 14-17. Rules are not necessary to award a contract.
- DCAB will, however, provide a report to the 2012 Legislature describing progress toward contracting services and include recommendations for a funding mechanism for ongoing services and a permanent home for the program after two years as noted in Section 3 of the bill.
- Sunset the Act in two years.

See attached for wording to include in a House Draft 2.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Fischlowitz-Leong
BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG

Chairperson
Legislative Committee

Francine Wai

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

PROPOSED WORDING TO USE IN Senate Bill 893, SD 3, HD 2

Proposed wording for:

SECTION 2. Chapter 348F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§348F- Telephone-based access to time-sensitive print media. (a) the state shall provide a telephone-based audible information access service that is available statewide to individuals with visual or other impairments that limit access to print media.

(b) The disability and communication access board, subject to the availability of funding, shall award a contract to provide this service to one or more providers that the board determines to be best qualified.

(c) As used in this section:

"Telephone-based audible information access service" means the delivery of current daily newspapers and other periodicals in audio format through a telephone call to a local or toll-free telephone number."

Proposed wording for:

Section 3: The board shall submit a report to the legislature no later than 20 days prior to the start of the regular session of 2012 describing its progress toward contracting with qualified providers of a telephone-based audible information access, and recommending a mechanism for providing ongoing funding for the service and a permanent home for the program after two years.

Proposed wording for:

Section 7: This Act shall take effect upon approval and shall be repealed on June 30, 2013.

Senate Bill 893 SD3 HD1

House Committee on Finance

Thursday, March 31, 2011

Re: Support for SB893 SD3 HD1, "Relating to information access"

Dear Members of the House Committee on finance,

My name is Milton Ota, and I am the Sponsor Agent of the NFB-Newsline® program for the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I'm writing to you to ask that SB 893 SD3 HD1 be passed.

I have been using the service since 2000 and find that over the years the service has grown. I receive the Star-Advertiser and the Wall Street Journal daily, Diabetes Self Management and PCWorld (monthly) on a regular basis via e-mail. I also on occasion check the local channel information for upcoming events related to the blind and the television schedule to see what is coming up on TV. With now over 300 newspapers, periodicals and magazine I have a wide variety of choices to keep up to date in other states as well.

- Reading the Star-Advertiser give me access to full stories of headlines that you hear on TV and radio
- Reading Diabetes Self Management helps me to keep up with the latest information on how to better manage my diabetes
- The Wall Street Journal keeps me up to date with technology news and world events
- PCWorld allows me to read more detailed information on technology trends

The full benefit of using the NFB-Newsline® service means that I don't have to go to the different publication websites and have to deal with advertisements, pop-ups and a very busy and cluttered website just to read what I want. I can now contribute to a discussion about current events with my friends in an intelegint way.

At times I will also go to the NFB-Newsline® secure website and find an article from a previous issue of one of the publications that I have read to reread it or get it sent back to me via e-mail.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Milton Ota
NFB-Newsline® Sponsor Agent
National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii

Representative Marcus Oshiro and committee members

State Capitol

Honolulu, Hawaii

March 30, 2011

SB 893,HD1

My name is Nani Fife, and I am the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii (NFBH) and I am in support of SB 893, HD1. As a blind person and resident of Hawaii it is extremely important to be able to access real time information in our daily lives and as independent consumers of Hawaii.

I ask you to give us the right to information. So that we are better equipped to compete on an equal basis as our sighted peers.

The right to access information with the service of "Newsline" will give us the opportunity to succeed in our personal and professional lives. Newsline is a free service to qualified individuals who are print disabled or visual impaired. The service offers daily newspapers, magazines, periodicals, and job listings. The Star Advertiser is included with the services.

Many of us who use the service depend on the real time information which helps us be independent and empowered to make decisions to become successful individuals of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and please support SB 893, HD 1.

Best Regards, Nani Fife

March 30, 2011

Marcus R. Oshiro
House District 39
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 306
phone: 808-586-6200

Finance committee.

Dear all:

My name is Finia Kachita, and I am a user of Newsline, because I cannot read print due to my disability. I strongly support SB893-SD3-HD1 for the following reasons.

I use Newsline services to access my local paper, the Star-Advertiser and other current events, including Job listings in Hawaii or on the Mainland. If Newsline is not funded, I will not have access to the information I need to be aware of what is happening in Hawaii or nationally.

You might say, "have someone read the publications to me". I could do that, but is it really necessary to put such a burden on someone, let alone myself especially if I have to look for someone to read me the Papers?.

Let alone that it may be long after the time the paper and information was originally published?

If Newsline is no more, it would be like taking away my rights from me. How can we the disabled community be a part of society if we are limited to the necessary tools we need so we can live a normal life. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully yours,

Finia Kachita.

March 30, 2011

Marcus R. Oshiro
House District 39
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 306
phone: 808-586-6200

Finance committee.

Dear all:

I am in strong support of SB893-SD3-HD1 NewsLine. I've been using NewsLine for about a month. I am visually impaired and found the service very valuable.

I use to ask sighted family and friends for there help if and when they had the time to read me the news paper and want adds and now I don't have to inconvenience them any more. I can be independent and search local and national news papers, magazines, job listings ect. I ask you to please be in support of this Bill so not only myself, but others who are print disabled can use the same serviced and be independent too.

Sincerely,

Guywood Dela Cruz

SB 893 SD3, HD1

The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, chair
House Committee on Finance
Conference room 308 Thursday March 31, 2011 4:00 p.m.

March 29, 2011

Re: Strong Support for SB893 SD3, HD1, Relating to information access.

Dear Representative Oshiro and members of the Committee on Finance,

My name is Katie Keim-Stinnett, and I am a user of Newsline, because I cannot read print due to my disability. The importance of supporting the funding stream through this bill can make the difference in the lives of print disabled individuals and our ability to participate fully in our communities of Hawai'i.

I have used Newsline services since 1998 and access the following publications to get information about current events: The New Yorker, Atlantic Monthly, Diabetic Action Network, Honolulu Advertiser and now StarAdvertiser, Wall Street Journal, New York Times and the San Francisco News papers.

If Newsline is not funded, I will not have access to the information I need to be aware of what is happening in the local community or at a national level, which in turn disables me from participating actively in my community efforts in both career and volunteer organizations, as a vital tax paying voting citizen.

The Newsline service enables me daily to keep abreast with my colleagues in my work place. This is vital to my career as I work in the field of employment for individuals with disabilities. Access to current market trends, local and national events that affect our employment rate, postings of government public hearings and meetings, job listings, election and campaign information many times only found in our newspapers, often makes the difference both in my personal and working life to participate.

To enable all members of the community to be aware of what is happening in the community and to have informed voters, it is important to have access to publications that are available through Newsline. I encourage you to pass the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Katie Keim-Stinnett

TO: Finance Committee

Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair

House District 39
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 306
phone: 808-586-6200
repmoshiro@Capitol.hawaii.gov

From:

Virgil Stinnett
2943 Kalakaua Ave. Apt. # 304
Honolulu, HI 96815
Cell # 722-4243

Date: March 30, 2011

Re: SB893, SD3, HD1

As a blind individual I do strongly support S.B. 893, SD3, HD1. I strongly believe the importance of this bill for the purpose of access to information such as the newspaper and many other periodicals. In allowing the current law to be amended so that the Newline service can be funded. This will enable the Blind, Deaf Blind and people who are print disable to access the things that are not easily available to them. Newline is a program that helps me read the Newspaper like everyone who is sighted. It allows me to read today's paper at the same time as everyone else. In these times it is very crucial to be up-dated with what is happening in our World, Nationally, and locally. NewsLine allows people who have a difficult time accessing the Newspaper through normal means. It also gives, Blind and visually impaired individuals an opportunity to be able to interact with their peers at work and in their community with current events. Students are able to do research for school which requires them to learn about current events that are in their daily paper.

You might have questions such as:

1 Can't the Blind access the Newspaper via the internet?

Answer: Yes and No.

There are those in the blind community just as in the sighted community who can and have the ability to do so. Then there are those who can't, because they just don't have the ability or, because they don't have the means. It is also the way that the Deaf Blind can access the paper using the Newline service and down lode the paper to their Braille display. This is how the Deaf Blind can access the paper.

2 What about Braille?

Answer No. It is not reasonable it would cost more to print it in Braille, and it would take more time, which means that then the Blind individual would not be able to access

the Newspaper as quickly as their sighted peers. So today's News to the Blind would be yesterdays or even last weeks News.

3. Who else can use this service? Anyone who is registered with the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicap qualify. Also anyone who is print disable can use this service.

It just seems to make common sense to help keep an informational resource available, when you have the power to do so.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Dear Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and the members of the House Committee on Finance,

I support SB 893, SD3, HD1.

I use a system to have timely information from local and national newspapers, local agencies and organizations, national magazines, TV listings, and job listings read to me over the phone. It's helpful because I can call a direct or toll-free number any time of the day to access this material, skip or repeat articles or sections, and so on.

Before Newsline, I had to wait for someone to read the print information to me, or I scanned it into my computer, which was time-consuming and not always accurate. However, since the publishers upload the files to the system, I get accurate information in a timely manner--usually around the time the newspapers or magazines go to press.

It's important that this service be free to the individual subscribers, including a toll-free number, because of the 70% unemployment rate among the blind. Also, although many newspapers now offer some of their articles online for free, accessing the full papers over the phone is more affordable (especially with services like Lifeline) and more portable.

However, with on-demand access to news articles and job listings, print-disabled people can stay current and find employment. (In HI, those of us who are employed earn an average of about \$20 / hour...)

On the other hand, there's a direct number for those of us who have free long-distance, and those of us with internet access can also cut down on toll costs to the system by accessing the material on a password-protected website or download it in a specialized format to read on portable devices only available to the print-disabled.

Finally, this system is available to all print-disabled Americans (not just the blind, but also people with dyslexia, certain physical disabilities, elderly people who've lost enough sight to become legally blind, etc), but each state pays for their own citizens' access. We hope to have a stable source of funds because it's been difficult to fund Newsline from various private and government sources in HI, but if we can't find enough funding, we'll have to "go dark" until we have enough again for HI's subscriptions.

I personally experienced this. I signed up for Newsline when it first came online (in 1999 or 2000) while attending the Louisiana Center for the Blind. However, when we moved so my husband could pursue his PhD, we learned that Arkansas didn't have Newsline. I was relieved when we moved to CA, which had Newsline, and again when we moved back home around the time Newsline came online in HI in 2005. Having had to do without, I know how others will feel if we can't fund this essential service.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ronalene white - Kahaʻuʻu, HI
VP, Anuenue Chapter
National Federation of the Blind of Hawaiʻi

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 12:26 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: johnthays@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: John T. Hays
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: johnthays@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments:
JOHN T. HAYS
Interpreter/Translator
Post Office Box 1855
Honolulu, HI 96805-1855
Telephone (808) 947-6013; Fax (808) 951-7904 e-mail johnthays@gmail.com

March 20, 2011

To: State of Hawai'i - House of Representatives
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2011

Attention of the Committee on Finance
Chair - Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro
House District 39
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 306
phone: 808-586-6200
repmoshiro@Capitol.hawaii.gov

From: John T. Hays

Re: Testimony in favor of SB 893, SD3, HD1

I have served as an interpreter and translator in the federal and state courts of Hawai'i for approximately 26 years. From 1991 to the present, I have undergone 14 surgeries (5 on the left eye and 9 on the right eye) for hereditary defects in my eyes, and I am currently classified as legally blind, though I continue to carry out interpretation and translation jobs, with the assistance of specialized hardware and software. I am an active member of the National Federation of the Blind, Honolulu Chapter.

In order to continue to be informed on current events and on the work that I am still able to perform to help others in the pursuit of justice, I require assistance in the form of audio transmissions of the news and other services as described in SB 893.

Accordingly, I would like to express my support of this legislation, in the strongest possible terms.

John T. Hays

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 12:50 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: jatavaraes@hawii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Joseph A. Teixeira Tavares
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jatavaraes@hawii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments:

Prof Dr Joseph A. Teixeira Tavares
Legal International Consultant
Licensed by SUPREME COURT - NY State
2790 Kahaloa Drive - #505
Honolulu, HI 96822
Telephone (808) 664 1457; Cell (808) 234-3660 E-mail jatavaraes@hawii.rr.com

March 30, 2011

To: State of Hawai'i - House of Representatives
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2011
To: State of Hawai'i - House of Representatives
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2011

Attention of the Committee on Finance
Chair - Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro
House District 39
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 306
phone: 808-586-6200
repmoshiro@Capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Prof. Dr. Joseph A. Teixeira Tavares
Re: Testimony in favor of SB 893, SD3, HD1

I have served as a Legal International Consultant and translator in the several opportunities in the State of Hawai'i for approximately 10 years. From 2001 (I am a survivor of the Sept 11 2001 World Trade Center disaster) to the present, I have undergone 21 surgeries - Retina Hawai'i Institute (consequence of Sept 11) defects in my eyes, and I am currently classified as legally blind, though I continue to carry out interpretation and

translation jobs, with the assistance of specialized hardware and software. I am an active member of the National Federation of the Blind, Honolulu Chapter.

In order to continue to be informed on current events and on the work that I am still able to perform to help others in the pursuit of justice, I require assistance in the form of audio transmissions of the news and other services as described in SB 893.

Accordingly, I would like to express my support of this legislation, in the strongest possible terms.

Joseph A. Teixeira Tavares

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 1:10 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: lemke@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Ann Lemke, Ph.D., Counselor
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: lemke@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments:
Anne Lempke

Honorable Committee Chair and Members,

I am writing to urge your support of S.B.893 S.D.3, H.D.1. This legislation will support the provision of access to current newspapers and magazines and other time-sensitive print information by print-disabled people in the state of Hawaii. Those of us who cannot read standard printed material include blind and visually-impaired, dyslexic, traumatic brain injured, and persons with other kinds of physical and neurological disabilities. It is noteworthy that this is the only kind of media access system that can also be accessed by persons who are both blind and deaf.

I depend on having timely access to printed media information to be an informed, contributing member of my community. I often meet older individuals who are losing their vision who believe that they will no longer be able to read the newspaper. When I tell them about the Newsline service, they are both amazed and hopeful as they face vision loss.

Ann Lemke, Ph.D., Counselor
lemke@hawaii.edu
808-235-7448

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 11:58 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: hearkylaugh@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Sabrina Laconsay
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: hearkylaugh@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments:
Sabrina Laconsay SB893 SD3, HD1

To; Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro
, Chair
Finance Committee
House District 39
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 306
Phone: 808-586-6200
repmoshiro@Capitol.hawaii.gov
From: Kyle Sabrina Laconsay
National Federation of the Blind, Hawaii
Affiliate Treasurer
Honolulu Chapter, President

Dear Representative Oshiro,

My name is Kyle Sabrina Laconsay, and I serve both on the affiliate board, as treasurer, and on the Honolulu chapter board, as president of the National Federation of the Blind, Hawaii. I am writing in regards to SB893 and to express my support of "Newsline";

I am, what I call, "half-blind"; I have NO sight in my right eye and LITTLE sight in my left. Because my cup is only "half"; full, I never take life or ANYTHING for granted.

I can actually pick up a newspaper and "read"; it with my LARGE magnifier. But, THAT easy, normal, day-to-day effort, again, I don't take for granted. My friends that are completely blind who cannot see, do NOT have that option...THEY NEED NEWSLINE! Sure, they can LISTEN to a television newscast, but I KNOW, having a Bachelor of Arts Degree in broadcasting, "newsprint"; is different. Print writers have to "paint a picture"; in your mind, because they are trained to WRITE that way. In television, the dialogue assumes you are "watching"; and therefore, does not provide a complete description of the news. Blind people, or anyone who are unable to read "print"; should be entitled to print media and to deprive them from it, is a tragedy!

Please Rep. Oshiro, we ask for your help to keep Newsline available to those who want it, who need it and rely on it! We should have the same kind of conveniences and services as do the general public. Picking up our phone to listen to "Newsline" should be as accessible to a blind person as picking up a newspaper is to a sighted person. The only difference is, we will never take it for granted!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Kyle S. Laconsay

FINTestimony


From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 11:37 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: naomi@naophotography.com
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Naomi Olson
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: naomi@naophotography.com
Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments:


FINTestimony

:
Sent: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Thursday, March 31, 2011 1:13 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: caota@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Charlene Ota
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: caota@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/31/2011

Comments:

 Honorable Finance Committee Members, I am writing in strong support of SB893 SD3 HD1 and ask for your support. Newsline Service is an important part of my regular routine for gaining access to timely news and other useful information I would not otherwise have access to. This is a service to anyone who is unable to read print due to a disability and it gives us all equal access to newspapers along with sighted friends and colleagues. I would ask that you please support continued funding of this much needed service for people with disabilities in Hawaii. Thank you!

Respectfully,
Charlene Ota
Honolulu, Hawaii

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 10:36 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: rtmagan@hcc.ncsc.mil
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Ronilo Maganis
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: rtmagan@hcc.ncsc.mil
Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments:
I support SB893.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 10:14 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: snoopytdr@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for SB893 on 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/31/2011 4:00:00 PM SB893

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Tammy Robar
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: snoopytdr@aol.com
Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments: