



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY AND JUDICIARY AND LABOR

House Bill 2404, HD1 – Relating to Public Information

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) takes no position on this measure but wishes to provide comments.

DCAB's mission is to provide technical assistance related to accessibility for individuals with disabilities to state and county programs and services per the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II. The purpose of this bill is to require any board as defined under section 92-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make its minutes available in hard copy form and by electronic posting on its web site, or if it does not have a web site, on the official Internet web site of the State of Hawaii or the official web site of the appropriate county.

Allowing state and county agencies to post minutes online presumes that everyone has access to a computer. In many instances, that is not the case, especially for individuals with disabilities or who are elderly. If an individual does not have access to a computer, state and county governments are excluding a segment of the population and denying them the means to participate in government.

Two points to consider are: 1) if a state or county agency publishes minutes online, all material published must be in a format that is accessible to individuals with disabilities, including people who are blind or have low vision; and 2) anyone (including people with disabilities) requesting hard copy of minutes must be provided the copy in an alternate format, upon request. We suggest posting a notice on the agency web site or on the official Internet web site of State or county government that hard copy of minutes will be provided in alternate format, upon request. Alternate format of print materials include audiotape, Braille, large print, and computer diskette and can be mailed to the individual as "Free Matter for the Blind."

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments.

Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG
Chairperson

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director