

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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March 19, 2012

MEMORANDUM:

TO: The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair
House Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
House Committee on Health

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2435, S.D. 1 - RELATING TO INFORMATION ACCESS**

Hearing: Monday, March 19, 2012, 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for 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.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports S.B. 2435. We ask that if this appropriation is approved that it does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

It is essential for our clients who are print disabled to have access to the Newsline service. Print disabled clients include, but are not limited to, clients who have blindness and visual impairments; dyslexia; or have learning disabilities. The Newsline service allows

these clients to have access to real-time information such as job listings, local and national media information, postings of our public hearings that solicit commentary on our state plans and many other types of information necessary for our clients to live independently.

Access to the Newslite service is already available for persons on Oahu. This appropriation will provide access for residents on the Neighbor Islands.

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

Testimony for HUS/HLT 3/19/2012 10:00:00 AM SB2435

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Milton Ota
Organization: Individual
E-mail: mota1252@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/17/2012

Comments:

Hello committee Members of HUS & Fin:

My name is Milton Ota and I'm a member of the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii and the NFB-NEWSLINE Sponsor. I personally use the NFB-NEWSLINE service on a daily basis to keep up with current news in technology, local events, and health. I occasionally use the local television listing and Target Weekly Ads which is available nationwide and can be set to cover the local stores.

As the NFB-NEWSLINE Sponsor I get calls from many of our subscribers saying how much they appreciate being able to get the local news and especially checking the Obituary.

The service has now over 580 qualified subscribers who live in Hawaii and we know that there are a lot more blind and print disabled persons who can qualify for the service and take advantage of all that is offered.

I urge you all to pass SB2435 so that we can reach more people for this great service.

Thank you for taking this written testimony.