
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE STATE OF HAWAI'I TO REVIEW AND UPDATE ITS
TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES AND ACCESS FOR THE DEAF,
INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING DISABILITIES, AND INDIVIDUALS WITH
SPEECH DISABILITIES AND TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE
FEASIBILITY OF INSTALLING HEARING LOOP TECHNOLOGY IN THE
STATE CAPITOL.

1 WHEREAS, individuals who are deaf or who have a hearing or
2 speech disability must often utilize technology and technology-
3 based services and equipment to effectively communicate with
4 others; and
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6 WHEREAS, telecommunications relay services are telephone
7 transmission services that provide an individual who has a
8 hearing or speech disability with the ability to engage in
9 communication by wire or radio with a hearing individual in a
10 manner that is functionally equivalent to the ability of an
11 individual who does not have a hearing or speech disability to
12 communicate using wire or radio voice communication services;
13 and
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15 WHEREAS, telecommunications relay services have
16 traditionally meant text-to-voice teletypewriter (TTY)-based
17 services; and
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19 WHEREAS, new internet-based technology is now readily
20 available; and
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22 WHEREAS, many text-to-voice teletypewriter users have
23 switched to other means of communication; and
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25 WHEREAS, a hearing loop, also known as an audio-induction
26 loop, is a wire that circles a room and electromagnetically
27 transmits sound to a compatible hearing aid or cochlear implant,



1 allowing the user to clearly hear the sounds transmitted by the
2 sound system; and
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4 WHEREAS, hearing loop technology installed in the Arizona
5 and Rhode Island state capitols and across Europe has been used
6 with success by individuals who are deaf or have a hearing
7 disability; and
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9 WHEREAS, the State of Arizona installed hearing loop
10 technology in eight hearing rooms, the Senate and House of
11 Representatives galleries, and the chamber floors of the Arizona
12 State Capitol at a cost of \$250,000; and
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14 WHEREAS, the position of the National Association of the
15 Deaf is that it is imperative to periodically update laws and
16 regulations to incorporate new and emerging telecommunications
17 equipment and services to ensure continued accessibility and
18 usability; and
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20 WHEREAS, according to data from the United States Census
21 Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics, there are
22 approximately one hundred ten thousand residents in the State
23 who are deaf or have a hearing or speech disability; and
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25 WHEREAS, the Public Utilities Commission has a
26 responsibility to implement intrastate telecommunications relay
27 services for individuals who are deaf or have a hearing or
28 speech disability; and
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30 WHEREAS, the State has established the Office of Enterprise
31 Technology Services headed by the Chief Information Officer who
32 is charged with organizing, managing, and overseeing information
33 technology governance in the State; and
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35 WHEREAS, the Disability and Communication Access Board
36 serves as a public advocate for persons with disabilities by
37 providing advice and recommendations with regard to legislation,
38 rules, policies, procedures, and plans relating to persons with
39 disabilities and their civil rights or service needs; now,
40 therefore,
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42 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
43 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
44 of 2018, the Senate concurring, that the Office of Enterprise



1 Technology Services, in consultation with the Public Utilities
2 Commission and the Disability and Communication Access Board, is
3 requested to review existing and emerging telecommunications
4 equipment, services, and policies to ensure continued
5 accessibility and usability for individuals who are deaf or who
6 have a hearing or speech disability, and identify any areas
7 where accessibility and usability can be improved; and
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Enterprise
10 Technology Services, in consultation with the Disability and
11 Communication Access Board, is requested to study the
12 feasibility of installing hearing loop technology in the State
13 Capitol; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include:
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17 (1) The costs, including electrical upgrades, if needed,
18 of installing hearing loop technology in the chambers,
19 auditorium, and all or some of the hearing rooms of
20 the State Capitol; and
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22 (2) An installation schedule for the hearing loop
23 technology; and
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Enterprise
26 Technology Services, in consultation with the Public Utilities
27 Commission and the Disability and Communication Access Board, is
28 requested to submit a report of its findings and
29 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
30 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
31 the Regular Session of 2019; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chief
35 Information Officer, Chair of the Public Utilities Commission,
36 Director of Health, and Chair of the Disability and
37 Communication Access Board.

