



# DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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

February 27, 2017

## TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

### Senate Bill 834, Senate Draft 1 – Relating to Videoconferencing

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) is a statewide Governor-appointed Board with a majority of its members being persons with disabilities or family members. The Board's mission is to advocate and promote full inclusion, independence, equal access, and quality of life for persons with disabilities in society. This testimony represents a position voted upon by the Legislative Committee of the Board.

The purpose of the bill is to require both chambers of the Legislature to implement rules to permit residents on neighbor islands to present testimony through audiovisual technology. The bill also appropriates an unspecified amount of funds to establish audiovisual systems throughout the State. DCAB takes no formal position on this measure but offers comments about accessibility issues related to individuals with disabilities.

- Residents on the neighbor islands include people with and without disabilities. The Legislature is a Title II entity under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and subject to requirements for effective communication to allow equal access to testify at hearings for individuals with disabilities. Auxiliary aids or services for individuals with communication-related disabilities include: American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, captioning, notetaking, audiodescription or narration if anything is shown visually on the screen to be accessible, and possibly a voice interpreter for anyone who does not speak clearly to be understood due to a disability. The provision of auxiliary aids or services need to be included in any rules established for videoconferencing.
- Auxiliary aids or services have costs associated with provision of these services. Since there is an unspecified appropriation in this measure, costs of the auxiliary aids or services should be factored into the appropriation.
- The site selected for use during the videoconferencing needs to be physically accessible with accessible parking, accessible route to the entrance and exits, and restroom facilities (if made available to the general public).

We appreciate the Legislature taking people with disabilities who are residents of neighbor islands who may also want to participate in the legislative hearing process into consideration and to ensure equal access for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

  
BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG  
Chairperson  
Legislative Committee

  
FRANCINE WAI  
Executive Director



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS  
Monday, February 27, 2017 — 9:40 a.m. — Room 211

**Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports SB 834 SD 1, Relating to Videoconferencing**

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and reduce waste. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

**Ulupono strongly supports SB 834 SD 1**, which requires both chambers to implement rules to permit residents to present testimony through audiovisual technology, because it aligns with our goal of creating more locally produced food.

Agricultural issues often disproportionately impact rural neighbor island constituencies as that is where farmers live and operate their farms. However, when legislation impacts their business it is extremely challenging for them to testify at the Legislature. Most rural farmers can't afford to leave their farms for an entire day or have the financial resources to book last minute flights. Once at the Capitol, parking can be a logistical challenge and they must also consistently monitor their parking meter while testifying. If hearings run long, these trips are often in vain since they cannot stay due to their departing flight.

This leads to a situation where representation on agricultural issues can be greatly underrepresented. When legislators need to decide policies and funding priorities, having bona fide farmers explaining their experiences and viewpoints can be the definitive factor.

As videoconferencing technology becomes more sophisticated and is widely used by citizens, it is critical that the legislative process progresses with such technology. This will result in more informed decision making and increased civic engagement through more accurate representation, increased accountability, and greater transparency.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become more complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this

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committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that by collaborating, we can help produce more local food and support an economically robust homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta  
General Partner



Senate Ways and Means Committee  
Chair Jill Tokuda, Chair Donovan Dela Cruz

02/27/2017 at 9:40 AM in Room 211  
SB834 SD1 – Relating to Videoconferencing

TESTIMONY — SUPPORT / COMMENTS  
Corie Tanida, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

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Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

**Common Cause Hawaii supports and offers comments on SB834 SD1** which would require both legislative chambers to implement legislative rules that would make it possible for neighbor island residents to give live oral testimony through videoconferencing (audio/visual) technology.

Part of Common Cause Hawaii's mission is to encourage public participation in the political process. Our members and supporters often tell us that being geographically distanced from the Capitol (e.g., neighbor island residents, or even residents who live or work outside of downtown Honolulu) makes it difficult for them to productively participate in the government. Common Cause Hawaii supports this bill because it takes a step forward toward fostering public participation in the political process.

We also ask the Committee to consider these suggestions:

- Ensure that videoconferencing capability is made available to Oahu residents as well – particularly those who work or live in Leeward, or North Shore Oahu.
- Ensure videoconferencing is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Provide clarity that this bill requires videoconferencing in hearings, not merely make videoconferencing possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on SB834 SD1.

**LATE**

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 26, 2017 11:28 PM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Cc:** legechair@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB834 on Feb 27, 2017 09:40AM\*

**SB834**

Submitted on: 2/26/2017  
Testimony for WAM on Feb 27, 2017 09:40AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Simon Russell	Hawaii Farmers Union United	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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**HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**  
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

**RANDY PERREIRA**, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature, State of Hawaii  
The Senate  
Committee on Ways and Means

**LATE**

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 27, 2017

S.B. 834, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO VIDEOCONFERENCING

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose and intent of S.B. 834, S.D. 1 which requires the House of Representatives and the Senate to implement rules to permit residents to present testimony through audiovisual technology.

Due to the constrictive and fast-paced legislative timetable, it is often a severe financial hardship for neighbor island residents to actively participate in our democratic process. For example, when the Legislature was considering the privatization of the Maui Region of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, employees had to take time off of work, purchase airline tickets – often with only 48-hours notice, and arrange ground transportation to attend a hearing. Many of our members chose to expend their valuable time and money to share their expertise and ensure their voices were heard, but we firmly believe many more would have taken advantage of remote testimony technology. We are confident that this same situation is all too familiar for too many neighbor island residents, regardless of the issue at hand. The passage of this measure is the first step toward ensuring access no matter where a Hawaii resident resides.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 25, 2017 7:39 AM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Cc:** katc31999@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB834 on Feb 27, 2017 09:40AM\*

**SB834**

Submitted on: 2/25/2017

Testimony for WAM on Feb 27, 2017 09:40AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kat Culina	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 25, 2017 9:26 PM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Cc:** 333cory@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB834 on Feb 27, 2017 09:40AM

**SB834**

Submitted on: 2/25/2017

Testimony for WAM on Feb 27, 2017 09:40AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha legislators, More citizen involvement leads to more well-considered policies. More neighbor island input leads to policies that work better statewide. mahalo, Cory Harden, Hilo

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