
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO REMOTE TESTIMONY IN LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that as an island state,
2 Hawaii's geography poses particular challenges for residents of
3 the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui to actively participate
4 in the legislative process by testifying in person in committee
5 hearings. Although legislative committees accept written
6 testimony via electronic means, presenting in-person, face-to-
7 face testimony before the legislature is costly and time-
8 consuming for neighbor island residents and others who reside
9 far from the state capitol.

10 Neighbor island residents who physically attend legislative
11 committee hearings to testify on measures and actively engage in
12 the legislative process incur significant air travel and other
13 transportation costs, and in some instances, lodging costs. For
14 these individuals, providing testimony to the legislature in
15 person often means taking time off from work.

16 The legislature recognizes the necessity of expanding
17 opportunities for neighbor island residents and other



1 individuals to enable them to actively participate in the
 2 legislative process and weigh in on issues. The legislature
 3 also recognizes that face-to-face public testimony can have a
 4 significant impact on legislators and the media and that
 5 enabling the public to provide live, real time remote testimony
 6 will improve citizen participation in and public access to the
 7 legislative process.

8 The purpose of this Act is to require each house of the
 9 legislature to establish procedures and necessary information
 10 infrastructure for the public to present oral testimony at
 11 legislative committee hearings through remote testimony.

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 21, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
 13 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
 14 read as follows:

15 "§21- Remote testimony; rules. (a) Each house of the
 16 legislature shall establish, by rule, procedures that enable:

17 (1) The legislature to use remote testimony at legislative
 18 committee hearings; and

19 (2) The public to present oral testimony at legislative
 20 committee hearings through remote testimony.



1 (b) As used in this section, "remote testimony" means the
 2 use of video conferencing or other technology that facilitates
 3 interaction between the public and members of the legislature
 4 and enables the public to submit oral testimony remotely via the
 5 Internet or other telecommunications technology during
 6 legislative hearings and proceedings."

7 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
 8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
 9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
 10 sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for
 11 fiscal year 2020-2021 to carry out the purposes of this Act.

12 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
 13 of accounting and general services for the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

15 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.



Report Title:

Remote Testimony; Legislature; Committee Hearings

Description:

Requires each house of the Legislature to establish, by rule, procedures for the public to present oral testimony at legislative committee hearings through remote testimony. Appropriates funds. (HB1153 HD1)

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