



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 433, SD2
RELATING TO SCREEN TIME AWARENESS.**

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Hearing Date: March 14, 2019

Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Department of Health estimates developing a social marketing campaign
2 to implement this measure would require about \$200,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2019-2020, and
3 \$350,000 in FY 2020-2021, and defers to the priorities in the Governor's Executive biennium
4 budget request.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports Senate Bill 433, Senate Draft 2
6 (S.B. 433, SD2) relating to the creation of a social marketing campaign regarding the effects of
7 screen time on children and teens; as long as it does not negatively impact the Governor's
8 Executive Biennium Budget request.

9 The Department, in partnership with the Department of Education (DOE) and University of
10 Hawaii, collects and reports on screen time by middle and high school students. The screen time
11 data is a proxy measure for sedentary behavior that is displacing physical activity. More than
12 four out of five of high school and middle school students played three or more hours of video
13 games on an average school day. However, less than one of five high school students, and less
14 than two of five middle school students met the federal physical activity requirements of sixty

1 minutes of physical activity a day, and muscle-strengthening activities on three or more days a
2 week.¹

3 The Department continues to work with agency and community partners statewide on
4 strategies to reduce children’s exposure to screen time and to encourage and create opportunities
5 for children to be physically active in Hawaii’s schools and communities. The most effective
6 strategies for reducing screen time have been behavioral interventions that include establishing
7 early childcare standards for limiting screen time, and providing technical assistance to childcare
8 providers and schools on reducing screen time.² Partnering with early childcare education
9 stakeholders, the Department helped to ensure inclusion of recommendations to prevent and
10 reduce exposure to screen media in the *Wellness Guidelines for Nutrition and Physical Activity*
11 *in Hawaii’s Early Care and Education Settings*.³

12 The Department does not currently conduct public education to reduce screen time in the
13 home, or to increase leisure-time physical activity among children and teens. Promoting
14 physical activity as an alternative to screen time is a nationally recommended strategy. The
15 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends reducing screen time through
16 increased physical activity and provides national recommendations for different age groups.⁴
17 The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends parents and caregivers develop a
18 family media plan. The personalized planning tool, video-based instructions and tips for parents
19 are available through their website, Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest.⁵ Parental engagement,
20 content quality, and quantity of the screen time, are all factors considered by the AAP in their
21 screen time policy recommendation that digital media use for children two to five years of age be

¹ [Youth Risk Behavioral Survey 2017, ibis.hhdw.org](http://ibis.hhdw.org)

² Community Preventive Services Task Force. (n.d.). *Preventing Obesity Through Reduced Screen Time Interventions*. Retrieved from <http://www.astho.org/Programs/Evidence-Based-Public-Health/Policy-Planning-Tools/Action-Sheet--Preventing-Obesity-Through-Reduced-Screen-Time-Interventions/>

³ Wellness Guidelines. (2018, October). Retrieved from <https://health.hawaii.gov/snap-ed/files/2018/03/wellnessguidelines.pdf>

⁴ Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018, January 29). Screen Time vs. Lean Time. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/multimedia/infographics/getmoving.html>

⁵ American Academy of Pediatrics, Media and Children Communication Toolkit, retrieved 2-6-19 from <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx>,

1 limited to no more than one hour per day to engage in other activities and establish healthy
2 viewing patterns for later in life.⁶ The Hawaii 5210 Initiative suggests limiting screen time to two
3 hours or less a day, and gives recommendations on how families can increase physical activity
4 as a means to reduce screen time.⁷

5 To align with these national and local recommendations, the Department supports the
6 development of a social marketing campaign to promote leisure-time physical activity as an
7 alternative to screen time for children and teens. The Department would rely on existing tested
8 interventions. The CDC conducted VERB an extensive social marketing campaign directed to
9 children across the continental U.S. aged nine to thirteen years of age. Those who reported
10 seeing more of the VERB messages showed a dose-response increase in physical activity.^{8,9}
11 Evidence shows that using positive messaging to motivate participation in physical activity has
12 been more effective than promoting the health costs of inactivity and would align the
13 intervention with evidence-based social marketing strategies.¹⁰

14 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

⁶ American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement, Pediatrics. November 2016, Vol 138/Issue 5. Retrieved 2-6-19 from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/138/5/e20162591>

⁷ Hawaii 5210 Initiative. (n.d.). Hawaii 5210. Retrieved from <http://www.hawaii5210.com/pages/about-the-program>

⁸ Huhman, ME., et al. Evaluation of a National Physical Activity Intervention for Children: VERB™ Campaign, 2002-2004. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Vol 32/Issue 1, January 2007, p.38-43.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379706004077?via%3Dihub>

⁹ Huhman, ME, et al. The Influence of the VERB Campaign on Children's Physical Activity in 2002-2006 American Journal of Public Health, 100(4):638-647, April 2010.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2836341/>

¹⁰ http://ei.yale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/pub282_Latimer_Rench_RIvers_Katulak_etal2008.pdf

SB-433-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2019 7:32:34 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/14/2019 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Justin Ho	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

I'm Justin Ho, a student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and I am testifying on SB433, RELATING TO SCREEN TIME AWARENESS. I am in support of this bill.

I agree with the sentiments of this bill. Excessive screen time negatively affects aspects of health, and this problem is especially prevalent in children and teens. Growing up, I have witnessed many of my classmates obsess over their devices, and I was probably one of the worst cases. I spent hours at a time playing games like League of Legends, and after every session I felt mentally and physically exhausted. I was less willing to go out and engage in physical activity, and my social life suffered when I didn't make efforts to meet my classmates outside of school.

Over time, I managed to realize my mistake and made a promise to myself to avoid addictive video games. I feel like many in my age group are dealing with or have dealt with the same problem of Internet/video game addiction.

However, I will offer the comment that many teens and young adults use video games to bond with each other. For example, my partner and I met through a screen. We play video games regularly together, and there's a difference between playing alone and playing with positive interaction. Games such as Mario Party and Scribblenauts can be used for socialization and bonding--especially if the person is predisposed to be uncomfortable in situations such as house parties. Addiction is still possible in social games. However, moderate use should not be criminalized.

This campaign, if passed, should make sure to differentiate between spending time on the screen solitarily--which is what I believe can contribute to depression and anxiety--and using screens for interactive/educational apps that can help with a person's wellbeing. This campaign should also make light of games that can promote physical health, such as Pokemon Go. For example, The Guardian states that augmented reality games can promote exercise. In the first week after downloading Pokemon Go, the average player was taking 955 extra steps per day. Although this wasn't a sustained gain over six weeks, a campaign like this one can further push the popularity and longevity of video games that have a physical component.

This campaign should also have the potential to stretch to the college population. Internet addiction disorder (IAD) is estimated to be present in 8-13% of college students. According to research, IAD can have negative effects in multiple areas such as academics, physical and mental health, and relationships with family members.

All in all, if done with mindfulness and moderation, I am optimistic that this campaign can positively influence young people's overall physical and mental health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Justin Ho

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SB-433-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2019 6:36:18 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/14/2019 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Paer	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Apologies for my late testimony. Born and raised in Hawaii, I care a great deal about our youth as they are our future. I strongly support informing parents about the consequences of excessive screen time. Having talked to a number of parents, I have consistently heard they get little-to-no quality information from their pediatricians on this issue. A large study of ~2500 children was published in JAMA Pediatrics and found high screen use was associated with speech and motor developmental delays. Other research finds links between excessive screen use and ADD, anxiety, autism, lack of empathy and more.

Currently there is no authoritative organization warning parents or providing them with research on this topic. They see the government, their doctor and their school are virtually silent on the issue and look around at all the kids using it and figure if it caused harm, someone would surely be warning them.

This bill provides the Hawaii legislature to be a leader on an issue that has serious implications for our keiki's wellbeing. The amended bill unfortunately eliminates the language about warning parents about harm, which is the main intent of the bill. Instead it focuses on child exercise. It is worth noting the DOH already has an initiative to reduce childhood obesity. It would eliminate a key part of the bill, which is creating a website parents can go to that lists the harms of excessive screen time and links to relevant research. Many parents will want evidence before enduring the inconvenience of restricting their children's screen use. It's a daunting research task. The website was intended to do this work for busy parents who do not have for this undertaking themselves. Parenting is the hardest job in the world. We should support parents by providing them with quality information on this relatively new, complex issue that can have serious consequences for their children's wellbeing. Thank you.