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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO A BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY OFFICE.

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

1       SECTION 1. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by  
2 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read  
3 as follows:

4                               **"CHAPTER**

5                               **HAWAII BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY OFFICE**

6       **§ -1 Definitions.** As used in this chapter:

7       "Broadband" means high-speed internet access that is always  
8 on, including mobile and fixed technologies.

9       "Department" means the department of business, economic  
10 development, and tourism.

11       "Digital equity" means a condition in which all individuals  
12 and communities have the information technology capacity needed  
13 for full participation in society, democracy, and the economy.

14       "Office" means the Hawaii broadband and digital equity  
15 office.



1       §   -2   Hawaii broadband and digital equity office;  
2   establishment; state broadband strategy coordinator. (a) There  
3   is established the Hawaii broadband and digital equity office  
4   within the department.

5       (b) The director of business, economic development, and  
6   tourism shall appoint a state broadband coordinator, who shall  
7   be exempt from chapter 76, to head the office.

8       §   -3   Hawaii broadband and digital equity office; duties.  
9   In furtherance of the State's objectives and policies for the  
10   economy pursuant to section 226-10.5, the office shall:

11       (1) Develop and implement specific strategies and plans to  
12           aggressively increase broadband affordability,  
13           penetration, and competitive availability in the  
14           State;

15       (2) Support the efforts of both public and private  
16           entities in the State to enhance or facilitate the  
17           deployment of and access to competitively priced,  
18           advanced electronic communications services, including  
19           broadband and its products and services and internet  
20           access services of general application throughout the  
21           State;



- 1 (3) Promote the landing of trans-Pacific submarine cable,  
2 including the development of a shared access cable  
3 station and associated terrestrial connectivity to  
4 reduce barriers to fiber landing in Hawaii;
- 5 (4) Promote, advocate, and facilitate the implementation  
6 of the findings and recommendations of the Hawaii  
7 broadband task force established by Act 2, First  
8 Special Session, Session Laws of Hawaii 2007;
- 9 (5) Support the findings of the community-based Broadband  
10 Hui as reflected in its digital equity declaration;
- 11 (6) Administer grant programs in support of broadband  
12 infrastructure, innovation, and the digital economy;
- 13 (7) Actively seek out funding from public and private  
14 sources in furtherance of the office's duties pursuant  
15 to this section; and
- 16 (8) Provide a repository, aggregation point, and  
17 governance framework for broadband mapping and digital  
18 equity data from various sources, including digital  
19 literacy, telehealth, distance education, remote work,  
20 internet accessibility, and service coverage to



support mapping, reporting, infrastructure deployment,  
and data-driven policy.

**§ -4 Broadband planning and coordination; cooperation.**

(a) The office shall:

(1) Seek input and the widest possible cooperation from  
public and private agencies and individuals to achieve  
the purposes of this chapter;

(2) Work closely with and assist the counties in the  
promotion of coordinated state and county broadband  
planning;

(3) Encourage every state department, county agency, and  
other public or private agencies and individuals  
involved in broadband programs to participate in the  
activities of the office and incorporate, to the  
extent feasible, the ideas and suggestions of the  
participants in the office's comprehensive planning  
goals;

(4) Monitor the broadband-based development efforts of  
other states and nations in areas such as business,  
education, and health;



(5) Advise the department on other states' best practices involving remote work promotion and policies and strategies related to making affordable broadband services available to every home and business in the State;

(6) Monitor broadband-related activities at the federal level;

(7) Encourage public-private partnerships to increase the deployment and adoption of broadband services and applications;

(8) Monitor regulatory and policy changes for potential impact on broadband deployment and sustainability in the State; and

(9) Advise the director of business, economic development, and tourism on broadband deployment.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to delegate, or detract in any way from, the functions, powers, and duties conferred by law or rule on any department or agency of the State or county."

SECTION 2. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office; DBEDT

**Description:**

Establishes the Hawaii broadband and digital equity office within the department of business, economic development, and tourism. Effective 1/1/2050. (HD1)

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