

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**WRITTEN
TESTIMONY
ONLY**

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB809
RELATING TO BROADBAND.**

REP. AARON LING JOHANSON, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing Date: February 11, 2021 Room Number: N/A

1 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the establishment of the
2 Hawaii Broadband Office within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and
3 Tourism.

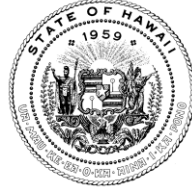
4 Telehealth has been a strategic priority for the Department of Health for the past several years,
5 and its relevance has only become more pronounced with the pandemic stay-at-home orders.
6 Rural residents in particular, but also those in low socio-economic urban areas and the elderly,
7 have no means to access the internet. A coordinated state strategy to identify and solve inequity
8 will enhance all sectors, not just health.

9 Appointing a health care or public health professional to serve on the council or liaise with the
10 council is respectfully recommended.

11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

12 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

13



DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN
LT. GOVERNOR

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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
Thursday, February 11, 2021
2:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 809, H.D. 1, RELATING TO BROADBAND**

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Johanson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ji Sook “Lisa” Kim, and I am the Cable Administrator of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs’ (Department) Cable Television Division. The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) establish the Hawaii broadband office within the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation; (2) establish the position of state broadband strategy officer; (3) rename the Broadband Assistance Advisory Council as the Broadband Advisory Council and amend its purpose and membership; (4) require the chief executive officer of the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to convene and chair the Broadband Advisory Council; and (5) appropriate funds.

The global pandemic, triggering stay-at-home and social distancing orders, has underscored the critical need for universal broadband access for distance learning, telework and job training, telehealth and social services, and social and civic

engagement. To meet this need, the Administration is focused on creating a healthy statewide broadband network and technology-driven diversification of our economy.

The Department recognizes the strong correlation between broadband access and economic development, with broadband access being essential to and yielding a strong and growing digital economy. The Department thus supports the creation of a broadband office authorized to develop the State's broadband strategy and policies with stakeholder input to: increase broadband affordability, penetration, and competitive availability in the State; support public and private efforts to deploy broadband infrastructure; seek funding and investment to further these ends; and support other initiatives, such as the landing of trans-Pacific submarine cable.

The Department, however, prefers the approach taken by administration measures H.B. 913 and S.B. 1067. These measures create a broadband office that focuses more globally on digital equity for all residents, so that they may participate in all aspects of a digital world, and that will more actively engage and coordinate with public and private stakeholders on efforts to grow a digital economy and effect digital equality for all residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MIKE MCCARTNEY
DIRECTOR

CHUNG I. CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Statement of
MIKE MCCARTNEY
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Thursday, February 11, 2021
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 329

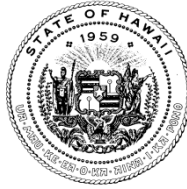
In consideration of
HB809 HD1
RELATING TO BROADBAND

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Kitagawa and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) **supports** the intent of HB809 HD1 that establishes the Hawaii Broadband Office within the Hawaii technology development corporation and provides the following comments.

- The COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the need for broadband infrastructure and digital equity across all of Hawaii's residents especially those in rural communities and socioeconomically disadvantaged circumstances. In 2021, this is being recognized by Federal stimulus programs directed to State departments.
- It is important that the Hawai'i Broadband Office flexibly coordinate work with Federal agencies, state departments, community partners and the private sector. We feel this is best positioned in DBEDT.
- The language in HB913 appropriately captures the roles and responsibilities of the Hawai'i Broadband & Digital Equity Office and the bill's language should be incorporated in HB809 HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



TESTIMONY BY:

JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
LYNN A.S. ARAKI-REGAN
DEREK J. CHOW
ROSS M. HIGASHI
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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February 11, 2021
2:00 P.M.
State Capitol, Teleconference

H.B. 809, H.D. 1
RELATING TO BROADBAND ADVISORY COUNCIL

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** H.B. 809, H.D. 1, that establishes the Hawaii broadband office within Hawaii technology development corporation. The bill also establishes the position of state broadband strategy officer, renames the broadband assistance advisory council as the broadband advisory council, and amends its purpose and membership. HB 809 also requires the chief executive officer of the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to convene and chair the broadband advisory council.

DOT agrees that the development and implementation of specific strategies to aggressively increase broadband affordability, penetration, and competitive availability in the State is vital for Hawaii's advancement into the telecommunications industry while providing economic development to underserved communities, so appropriated funds for the creation and staffing of the Hawaii broadband office will be essential.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Thursday, February 11, 2021; 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0809, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO BROADBAND.

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 0809, House Draft 1, RELATING TO BROADBAND.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would establish the Hawaii Broadband Office within the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to aggressively increase broadband affordability, penetration, and competitive availability in the State. The bill would also appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2021-2022, and the same for fiscal year 2022-2023, to establish two full-time equivalent positions exempt from Chapter 76, Hawaii Revised Statutes. This bill would take effect on July 1, 2050, to facilitate continued discussions on this issue.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

Hawaii has long been at the forefront of integrating newer technologies into daily life. One example of this is Hawaii's Telehealth Law which has served as a model across the United States. Yet, it was only after COVID struck our islands that this law became fully integrated into daily life.

Today, it is common practice to ZOOM or SKYPE with your health practitioner instead of physically going to the provider's office for a visit. When COVID first hit our islands, many health providers had to limit the number of patients that could be serviced in-person because of a scarcity of Personal Protective Equipment, restrictions in the gatherings of groups, and the need for changes to the physical arrangement of examination rooms and other diagnostic facilities.

Testimony on House Bill No. 0809, House Draft 1
Thursday, February 11, 2021; 2:00 p.m.
Page 2

For people with adequate broadband access, telehealth was a lifeline for the provision of essential primary health care services. Yet, health care facilities in rural areas experienced the same problems when COVID hit. They too had to limit the number of patients they could see. But because these communities lacked adequate broadband access, they were effectively cut off from primary care. Many were forced to bear their maladies until it became necessary to go to the emergency room.

The Governor's suspension of a statute that prohibits the use of standard telephonic service in telehealth has temporarily eased this inequity. For those without adequate broadband, at least for now, they are able to obtain basic primary care services over landline telephones. But that is neither adequate, tenable, nor fair to the thousands of citizens who lack broadband access.

Because of this, the HPCA views the lack of broadband access in rural areas as an issue of social equity. In this day and age, everyone should have equal access to health care. Telehealth was envisioned as the means of leveling the field between urban and rural areas. The lack of broadband ensures that urban and rural communities remain unequal.

As a member of the Broadband Hui, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



Written Statement of
Len Higashi
Acting Executive Director
Hawaii Technology Development Corporation
before the
House Committee On Consumer Protection & Commerce
Thursday, February 11, 2021
2:00 p.m.
Videoconference

In consideration of
HB809 HD1
RELATING TO BROADBAND.

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee.

The Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) offers **comments** on HB809 HD1 that establishes the Hawaii broadband office within HTDC; establishes the position of state broadband strategy officer; renames the broadband assistance advisory council as the broadband advisory council and amends its purpose and membership; requires the chief executive officer of the Hawaii technology development corporation to convene and chair the broadband advisory council; and appropriates funds.

HTDC supports efforts to increase broadband capacity in the state. HTDC already works closely with the Hawai'i Broadband Strategy Officer. We defer to the Department on the realignment proposed in the bill. HTDC looks forward to working with all stakeholders in moving broadband forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 329
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021 AT 2:00 P.M.**

To The Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair;
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

COMMENTS ON HB809 HD1 RELATING TO BROADBAND

Aloha, my name is Pamela Tumpap. I am the President of the Maui Chamber of Commerce, in the county most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of our dependence on the visitor industry and corresponding rate of unemployment. I am writing share our comments on HB809 HD1.

Broadband is a crucially important technology and we view it as a critical asset for our state's and county's overall economic development efforts. However, at this time, we need to leverage our assets and not expand government further. Rather than creating a new office under the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation, we should utilize the existing Hawaii Broadband Initiative under Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. We feel this would be more appropriate and cost effective.

Mahalo for your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

HB-809-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 12:56:21 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/11/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Miyahira	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Access to digital services is a must for our populace. More or more services depend on access to the internet including the delivery of health care services.