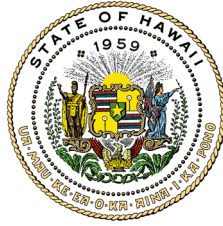


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**Testimony COMMENTING on SCR219/SR179
Relating to Kupuna and Digital Literacy**

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATOR LES IHARA, JR., VICE CHAIR

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
SENATOR SHARON Y. MORIWAKI, CHAIR
SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing Date: March 23, 2021
3:45 p.m.

Conference Rm: 225
Via Videoconference

1 **EOA's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency of the Department
2 of Health (DOH), provides comments to Senate Concurrent Resolution 219 and Senate
3 Resolution 179, Relating to Kupuna and Digital Literacy. The purpose of this bill is to encourage
4 the EOA to form a working group to develop a plan for outreach to kupuna to remediate a lack of
5 digital literacy and to develop a curriculum to increase digital literacy among Hawai'i's kupuna
6 community.

7 **Fiscal Implications:** These resolutions require significant resources to successfully implement
8 their intent. The EOA is limited in staffing and funding to convene a working group, develop a
9 digital outreach plan for kupuna, and develop a digital literacy curriculum for kupuna.

1 **Purpose and Justification:** The EOA appreciates the intent of this bill and understands the
2 value of kupuna having digital literacy skills and more importantly, access to broadband
3 connectivity particularly during COVID. However, these measures require significant resources
4 to successfully fulfill their intent, and the EOA is limited in staffing and funding. The EOA also
5 does not have the expertise in digital technologies to develop a digital literacy curriculum and/or
6 in broadband connection to develop an outreach plan.

7 EOA suggests working with the Legislative Reference Bureau to lead a working group to
8 research the number of kupuna who lack digital literacy, broadband access and computer
9 equipment and provide subject matter expertise to develop a plan to increase digital literacy for
10 our kupuna. Alternatively, EOA suggests combining SCR 219/SR179 and SCR 68/SR60
11 Requesting the Legislative Reference Bureau to Conduct a Study on Ways to Close the Digital
12 Divide to include a plan to increase digital literacy for our kupuna.

13 Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



ALOHACARE

Date: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

To: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Chair
Committee on Government Operations

From: Peggy Mierzwa, Senior Public Policy Analyst, External Affairs

RE: **SCR 219/ SR179 SUPPORT** Urging the Executive Office on Aging to form a working group and develop a plan for outreach to kupuna to remediate a lack of digital literacy, broadband access, and computer equipment

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of **SCR219/SR179**. This resolution encourages to the Executive Office on Aging to study and identify kupuna who are struggling with digital literacy, lack of broadband access and lack of equipment as well as to form a working group to develop a plan and systematic outreach to kupuna.

Founded in 1994, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving 73,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. It is the only state health plan exclusively serving Medicaid patients. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating access to quality healthcare for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person care, including access to housing and food security, to build a stronger, healthier Hawaii.

AlohaCare supports increasing the ability of our kupuna, and other groups who need support, to more easily and successfully access the critical resources that have been moved to the Internet during the course of the past year. Our providers have shared the challenges they face when trying to connect with their patients. Providers and clinics in rural neighbor island locations as well on Oahu in both urban and rural areas have patients who do not know how to competently use the Internet, do not have any broadband or there is insufficient broadband access to be able to utilize telehealth services.

The difficulties extend beyond telehealth. With vaccination roll outs, we are now hearing that our kupuna are having difficulty making appointments for their COVID vaccinations because they are asked to make those via the computer. Many do not have sufficient broadband or they lack the skill set to make the appointments. Our kupuna also face struggles trying to assist grandchildren with distance learning, as well as experiencing an overall social disconnect from an inability to easily navigate online technology. They want to be able to successfully access and navigate the online world.

AlohaCare requests to be added to the EOA's working group to help address this great need in our community and thanks the legislature for introducing and hearing SCR219/SR179.

1357 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1250, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Call: 973-0712 • Toll-free: 1-877-973-0712 • Fax: 808-973-0726 • www.AlohaCare.org

SCR-219

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 10:40:29 AM

Testimony for HMS on 3/23/2021 3:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Deborah Bond-Upson	Testifying for LearningBond	Support	No

Comments:

I am a minister, but I have spent my career supporting learning innovation and public education. I have also supported Unitarian Universalist churches in their efforts to use technology to communicate and share. And, as most of us, I interact with those my age and older who are frustrated and feel isolated from digital media and technology-driven processes.

Many kapuna feel left out and sometimes even depressed by their difficulties or inability to pursue daily living processes, annual renewals, use of media, communications, and media sharing.

Here in Hawai'i, I feel we are ahead of many communities in honoring our kapuna and living an 'ohana life. But we have not adequately supported our kapuna in the digital transformation now occurring.

I suggest we provide research, support, and hopefully develop mentorship, perhaps by young people, to our kapuna.

TESTIMONY OF LARRY S VERAY

TO

**COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS**

IN SUPPORT OF SCR219/SR179

***URGING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING TO FORM A WORKING GROUP
AND DEVELOP A PLAN FOR OUREACH TO KUPUNA TO REMEDIATE A LACK OF
DIGITAL LITERACY, BROADBAND ACCESS AND COMPUTER EQUIPMENT***

MARCH 21, 2021

Aloha, Chair Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Les Ihara (Committee on Human Services); Chair Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair Donovan Dela Cruz (Committee on Government Operations) and members. Although I am Larry Veray, Chair for the Pearl City Neighborhood Board No.21, I am submitting this testimony as an individual. I truly care about the 42,000 residents in Pearl City where we have one of the largest kupuna population in Hawaii.

Since March 2020 and as technology continues to push the envelope in all banking, telephone, government video teleconferencing using computers and Web based tools to conduct personal business. Many of our kupuna have been left behind. Because many of our kupuna, homeless families and released prisoners lack the digital skills necessary to fully use computers and the internet. Many rely on their family members to help them set up their automatic bank payments and other personal business required on the internet.

I most strongly urge you to support and approve SCR219/SR179 and set our kupuna up for education on computers and the internet in many languages for our multi-ethnic population, digital capabilities. and success. Mahalo!

Very respectfully,

Larry S. Veray