

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. Box 3378  
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**WRITTEN  
TESTIMONY  
ONLY**

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

REP. SEAN QUINLAN, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Hearing Date: February 3, 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 DOH was statutorily authorized in 2019 to establish a Statewide Telehealth Council, which  
10 would greatly benefit from a parallel Broadband Advisory Council.
- 11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
- 12 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.
- 13



**Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Development  
Wednesday, February 3, 2021; 9:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0809, RELATING TO BROADBAND.**

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt, 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, 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.

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**

**Wednesday, February 3, 2021; 9:30 a.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.

Lastly, we note that the Committee on Higher Education & Technology has scheduled a substantively similar bill, House Bill No. 0913, for public hearing today at 2:00 p.m. That bill would establish the Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, to aggressively increase broadband affordability, penetration, and competitive availability in the State.

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@hawaiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiipca.net).



Written Statement of  
**Len Higashi**  
Acting Executive Director  
Hawaii Technology Development Corporation  
before the  
**House Committee On Economic Development**  
Wednesday, February 3, 2021  
9:30 a.m.  
Videoconference

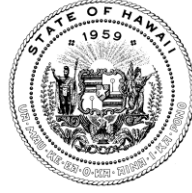
In consideration of  
**HB809**  
**RELATING TO BROADBAND.**

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt, and Members of the Committee.

The Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) offers **comments** on HB809 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.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN  
LT. GOVERNOR

**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

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CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI COLÓN  
DIRECTOR

JO ANN M. UCHIDA TAKEUCHI  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the  
House Committee on Economic Development  
Wednesday, February 3, 2021  
9:30 a.m.  
Via Videoconference**

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

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

Chair Quinlan 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 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Wednesday, February 3, 2021  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

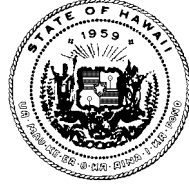
In consideration of  
**HB809**  
**RELATING TO BROADBAND**

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports the intent of HB809 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 1, 2021

TO: The Honorable Representative Sean Quinlan, Chair  
House Committee on Economic Development

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 809 – RELATING TO BROADBAND.**

Hearing: Wednesday, February 3, 2021, 9:30 a.m.  
Via videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to establish the Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Over the past ten months, DHS has collaborated with the Broadband Hui, a group of public and private sector entities, to increase Hawaii's digital capacity that will support the continuity of social connections, education, employment, and access to other essential services throughout the pandemic and beyond. Through the work of the Broadband Hui, we have supported broadband infrastructure development in rural communities, provided digital devices for students and families, supported the accessibility of telehealth, provided information on low-cost internet options, and adopted a Digital Equity Declaration<sup>1</sup> to set a vision and goals for a more equitable digital future.

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<sup>1</sup> See, <https://www.broadbandhui.org/>



Looking to that future, much work remains ahead. It will take an ongoing commitment and collaboration from public and private partners to deliver on the goals set forth to address Hawaii's digital inequities and to leverage the opportunities enabled by improved digital access. The creation of a dedicated state office to promote and facilitate these collective efforts will help ensure implementation of the vision and goals articulated in the Digital Equity Declaration are realized.

We recognize this measure may require a financial investment at a time the State is facing a budget deficit. There are federal and other resources available, and a dedicated office is a worthwhile investment to prioritize and address digital inequity through broadband access, digital literacy, and digitally-enabled societal systems and is a great opportunity to drive economic and social recovery, diversification, and resilience.

The purpose of this bill aligns with `Ohana Nui, the Department's integrated and multi-generational service delivery approach to reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty, dependence on public benefits, and improve each individual's and family's social and economic well-being and potential.

DHS defers to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, regarding administrative issues and the necessary appropriation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

February 3, 2021

Representative Sean Quinlan, Chair  
Representative Daniel Holt, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Economic Development  
Conference Room 312, Hawai'i State Capitol

RE: Testimony in support of HB 809, Relating to Broadband

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt, and Committee Members:

My name is Christine Sakuda and I serve as the executive director of Transform Hawai'i Government (THG), a coalition of organizations and individuals who advocate for an accessible, accountable and responsive state government that leverages technology to help citizens, communities, and businesses throughout Hawai'i to thrive. We provide a consistent and persistent voice to keep modernization a top priority of state government.

THG supports House Bill 809, Relating to Broadband, which establishes the Hawaii broadband office within Hawaii technology development corporation and establishes the position of state broadband strategy officer. This bill requires the chief executive officer of the Hawaii technology development corporation to convene and chair the broadband advisory council and appropriates funds.

As the co-host of the Broadband Hui, a growing group of public and private stakeholders who have committed to support broadband infrastructure and digital equity throughout the state, THG believes that broadband is a key investment in Hawai'i's future. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it abundantly clear that inequities exist in residents' access to broadband and digital devices. This impacts education and health outcomes along with economic opportunity for many, particularly for some of our most low-income and/or rural community members.

While we understand and share the concern around the state's unprecedented budget shortfall, we believe that now is the time to commit resources to develop a long-term vision, goals, and objectives to fast forward the economic and social recovery in a way that creates new opportunities well beyond the challenges we face today.

We urge you to pass House Bill 809 and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Sakuda  
Executive Director  
Transform Hawai'i Government  
email: [csakuda@TransformHawaiiGov.org](mailto:csakuda@TransformHawaiiGov.org) | phone: (808) 321-2811



**House Committee on Economic Development**

Date: February 3, 2021  
Time: 9:30a.m.  
Where: Via Videoconference

RE: **HB 809, Relating to Broadband**

Aloha mai e Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt, and members of the Committee.

The listed organizations and individuals **SUPPORT HB 809 with amendments**, which establishes the Hawai‘i Broadband and Digital Equity Office. The organizations support HB809 but without naming a location for the Office in this bill.

Over the past ten months, our organizations have collaborated, each within their own ability, to increase Hawai‘i’s digital capacity, thereby supporting the continuity of social connections, education, employment, and access to other essential services throughout the pandemic. Through the work of the Broadband Hui, we have supported broadband infrastructure development in rural communities, provided digital devices for students and families, supported the accessibility of telehealth, provided information on low-cost internet options, and adopted a Digital Equity Declaration to set a vision and goals for a more equitable digital future.

Looking to that future, much work remains ahead. It will take an ongoing commitment and collaboration from public and private partners to deliver on the goals set forth to address Hawai‘i’s digital inequities and to leverage the opportunities enabled by improved digital access. The creation of a dedicated state office to promote and facilitate these collective efforts will help ensure the progress of the Broadband Hui continues and that the vision and goals articulated in the Digital Equity Declaration are realized.

We recognize this measure may require a financial investment at a time the State is facing a budget deficit. We believe, however, that addressing digital inequity through broadband access, digital literacy, and digitally-enabled societal systems is one of our greatest opportunities for economic and social recovery, diversification, and resilience.

For these reasons, we kindly request you **PASS HB 809 with amendments**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

(Please see names on the following page.)

	Name	Organization	Email Address	Zip Code
1	David Miyashiro	HawaiiKidsCAN	david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org	96734
2	Jacqui Hoover	Hawaii Island Economic Development Board / Hawaii Leeward Planning	jhoover@hiedb.org	96743
3	Eugene Chang		eugene.chang@ieee.org	96817
4	Lynn Otaguro		lmotaguro@yahoo.com	96821
5	Rock Your Cause	Rock Your Cause	rise@rockyourcause.org	96826
6	Jenifer Sunrise Winter		jwinter@hawaii.edu	96821
7	Mayrose Munar	Kaunalewa	mayrose@kaunalewa.org	96752
8	Keoni Williams	O'ahu County Democrats Digital Equity Committee	williamskeoni@gmail.com	96822
9	Brad Kaleo Bennett	Auamo Collaborative	kaleobennett@gmail.com	96720
10	Dennis Teranishi		dennis.teranishi@pichtr.org	96816
11	Mary Therese Perez Hattori		maryhattori@gmail.com	96821
12	Deborah Bond-Upson	Learning Bond	deborah@learningbond.org	96734
13	Nathan Kam		nathangkam@gmail.com	96782
14	Linda Puppolo	Maui County Workforce Development Board	lpmindeze@gmail.com	96784
15	Ian Kitajima	Oceanit	ikitajima@oceanit.com	96797
16	Curtis Kropar	Hawaiian Hope Org	Curtis@HawaiianHope.org	96817
17	Neal Miyake		neosponge@gmail.com	96818
18	Katie Hendrickson	<a href="http://code.org">Code.org</a>	katie@code.org	45701
19	Wayne Buente		wbuente@hawaii.edu	96815
20	Susan Tai		susantaikaneko@gmail.com	96814
21	Mark Iha	Tangent Systems	mark@tangent.systems	96813
22	Sultan White	Office of Economic Revitalization	sultan.white@honolulu.gov	96826
23	Lorna Takehara Strand		lorna.strand@gmail.com	96701
24	Stacey Aldrich	Hawaii State Public Library System	stacey.aldrich@librarieshawaii.org	96825
25	Tony Velasco (City and County of Honolulu/DIT)		tvelasco@honolulu.gov	96813
26	'Olu Campbell	Kamehameha Schools	bocampbe@ksbe.edu	96813
27	Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD	John A Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai'i at Manoa	lbuencon@hawaii.edu	96813

LATE

**HB-809**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 4:39:06 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/3/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
MarshaRose Joyner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Marsha Rose Joyner

O`ahu County Democrats Digital Equity Committee

[Marshajoyner1938@gmail.com](mailto:Marshajoyner1938@gmail.com)

House Committee on Economic Development

Date: February 3, 2021

Time: 9:30a.m.

Where: Via Videoconference

**SUPPORT HB 809 with amendments** establishes the Hawai'i Broadband and Digital Equity Office within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

**RE: HB 809, Relating to Broadband**

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Holt,  
and members of the Committee

**SUPPORT HB 809 with amendments** establishes the Hawai'i Broadband and Digital Equity

More And More, the people of Hawaii require a broadband internet connection to live, work, and interact with Health Care. Yet far too many of our residents, many of whom are senior residents as well as persons with disabilities are historically overlooked and underserved communities. lack the skills, technologies, and supports needed to take advantage of the opportunities made available by a reliable broadband connection. 1 Absent help, they are at risk of being left behind. Expanding access to broadband is necessary but is far from sufficient. The Federal Government must work towards ensuring “all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy”—a principle call.

As we visit most of Hawaii, we have come to believe that everyone is not connected.

No matter where we or how live, the 21st century requires that you need access to today's method of communications. However today thousands of Hawaii residents lack the broadband access which they need to meaningfully participate in the digital age.

There are gaps in our population which most people do not see. The digital isolation crisis among seniors. Stressing the importance of digital health tools and social connectedness amid the coronavirus pandemic, The seniors who live alone or do not have grandchildren to assist them using the computer to order food for takeout or connect with telehealth for health-related services, especially in rural long distances. As we know the future belongs to the connected. There are computers for the blind. Cellphones for the hard of hearing.

I believe the future belongs to the connected. No matter who you are or where you live in Hawaii, you need access to modern communications to have a fair shot at 21st century success. But today millions of Hawaii residents lack the broadband access that they need to meaningfully participate in the digital age. The report – [\*Aging Connected: Exposing the Hidden Connectivity Crisis for Older Adults\*](#) – commissioned new research by two leading academics on the digital technology gap: John Horrigan from The Technology Policy Institute and Erin York Cornwell from Cornell University.

Should the Hawai'i Broadband and Digital Equity Office, create a workforce with necessary skills for training seniors and disable people so they will become active members of the community.

America's older population is facing a public health crisis as the digital divide restricts their ability to stay healthy, meaningfully engaged, and financially secure amid the pandemic and beyond,” said Thomas Kamber, executive director of Older Adults

Technology Services. “This new research shows that America is failing to close the digital gap for older adults, who more than ever need the tools to be connected and engaged online. Through our nationwide Aging Connected initiative, OATS looks forward to working with nonprofit organizations, corporate partners, and government policymakers to close the technology gap and expand affordable, quality broadband opportunities for America’s seniors.

Marsha Rose Joyner

O`ahu County Democrats Digital Equity Committee

[Marshajoyner1938@gmail.com](mailto:Marshajoyner1938@gmail.com)

House Committee on Economic Development

Date: February 3, 2021

Time: 9:30a.m.

Where: Via Videoconference

**SUPPORT HB 809 with amendments** establishes the Hawai‘i Broadband and Digital Equity Office within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

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