



## 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**

Monday, March 21, 2022

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 329

In consideration of

**SB2479**

**RELATING TO BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.**

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Kitagawa and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) **SUPPORTS** SB2479 that requires each public housing project, dwelling unit, and state low-income housing project that is built, renovated, or reconstructed after 1/1/2023, to include all necessary broadband infrastructure necessary for tenants to have access to broadband service.

Over the course of the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the need for broadband access for all of Hawai'i's residents. This is especially true in the case of residents in Hawai'i's public housing units where there are limited broadband options. SB2479 provides the options for multiple broadband providers to offer low-cost options.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
March 21, 2022

The Honorable Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair  
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce  
The Thirty-First Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Johanson and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SB2479 Relating to Broadband Infrastructure

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS SB2479**, which requires each public housing project, dwelling unit, and state low-income housing project that is built, renovated, or reconstructed after 1/1/2023, to include all necessary broadband infrastructure necessary for tenants to have access to broadband service.

COVID has shown that our communities, especially our most vulnerable, must turn more and more to internet-based support. Some of these supports come in the form of telehealth appointments and Zoom-based communication. COVID proved that many individuals within our intellectual and developmental disability community are part of a high-risk group that needs to rely on staying at home and using internet services more than the average citizen. If these individuals found themselves without internet, they would lose critical access to services during the pandemic.

As we continue to make strides in technology, more and more technology is invented that helps individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) live more independently. However, we find that having broadband access is key for most new technologies that rely on wi-fi to function. Any efforts to increase broadband access like in new renovations or reconstructions of public housing will aid in our communities' access to broadband services.

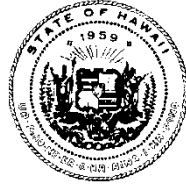
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of SB2479**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus".

Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY  
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 17907  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

Statement of  
**Hakim Ouansafi**  
Hawaii Public Housing Authority  
Before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE**

**Monday, March 21, 2022**  
**2:00 PM – Videoconference – Room 329, Hawaii State Capitol**

In consideration of  
**SB 2479**  
**RELATING TO BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Honorable Chair Johanson, and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning Senate Bill (SB) 2479, relating to broadband infrastructure.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) supports enactment of SB 2479, which requires each public housing project, dwelling unit, and state low-income housing project that is built, renovated, or reconstructed after 1/1/2023, to include all necessary broadband infrastructure necessary for tenants to have access to broadband service.

The HPHA has been working and continues to work with Federal and State Departments and Agencies, broadband internet service providers, and non-profit groups to plan and provide free or low-cost broadband opportunities for Federal and State public housing tenants. With the Legislature's assistance through Capital Improvement Project (CIP) appropriations, the HPHA will ensure to include all necessary broadband infrastructure into all future public housing unit new/modernization projects.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Committee with the HPHA's testimony. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.

Statement Before The  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & PROTECTION**  
Monday, March 21, 2022  
2:00 PM  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

in consideration of  
**SB 2479**  
**RELATING TO BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.**

Chair JOHANSON, Vice Chair KITAGAWA, and Members of the  
House Consumer Protection & Protection Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB 2479, which requires each public housing project, dwelling unit, and state low-income housing project that is built, renovated, or reconstructed after 1/1/2023, to include all necessary broadband infrastructure necessary for tenants to have access to broadband services.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy - one that works for everyone and not just the monied few.

As technology advances, many of our basic democracy values depend on robust connectivity. Broadband enhances civic engagement, participation in the democratic process, and a responsive government. Yet too many in Hawaii lack access to affordable, high-speed broadband and continue to face significant barriers to get online.

Affordability remains the most significant barrier to broadband adoption while those on the wrong side of the digital divide are disproportionately low-income, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, and other marginalized communities. Without broadband, these communities live in a democracy where their voices go unheard, and their needs are unmet.

Therefore, it is clear that access to affordable broadband is a necessity in today's society for a functioning and vibrant democracy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2479. If you have any questions of me, please contact me at [sma@commoncause.org](mailto:sma@commoncause.org).

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma  
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



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**The State Legislature**  
**The House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce**  
**Monday, March 21, 2022**  
**2:00 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Aaron Johanson, Chair

RE: Support for S.B. 2479, Relating to Broadband Infrastructure

Aloha Chair Johanson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a membership organization of people age fifty and over, with over 140,000 members in Hawai'i. **AARP supports S.B. 2479** which requires each public housing project, dwelling unit, and state low-income housing project that is built, renovated or reconstructed after 1/1/2023, to include all necessary broadband infrastructure necessary for tenants to have access to broadband services

The recent pandemic has significantly increased the demand and use of broadband for communication across all sectors, and throughout our communities statewide. Students are engaged in distance learning for their schoolwork, businesses for e-commerce transactions and patients have become more reliant on telehealth to connect with their physicians for medical consultation and monitoring. This is especially important for homebound kūpuna at risk of exposure during this health pandemic. The heavy demand for broadband access has amplified the weakness in our broadband infrastructure especially in rural communities, and other underserved or unserved areas in the State. AARP supports efforts that will expand digital equity and access, close the gap in the disparity to ensure that all individuals and communities have access to information and modern communication technologies. Having the broadband infrastructure included in future public housing dwellings will assist many who could not afford the connectivity on their own.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to **support S.B. 2479**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keali'i S. Lopez".

Keali'i Lopez, State Director



Written Statement of  
**Jeannine Souki**  
Sr. Manager – Government & Regulatory Affairs

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE**

MARCH 21, 2022, 2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Room 329 & Videoconference

**SUPPORT FOR:**

**S.B. NO. 2479 RELATING TO BROADBAND SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE**

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

Re: Testimony providing support for SB 2479

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments on Senate Bill 2479. The primary intent of this bill is to require each public housing project, dwelling unit, and state low-income housing project that is built, renovated or reconstructed after January 1, 2023, to include all broadband infrastructure necessary for tenants to have access to broadband service.

Over the last two years, this worldwide pandemic has affected each and every one of us in countless ways. And, it has solidified the importance of staying connected with ‘ohana, our customers, and our communities.

Hawaiian Telcom is committed to enabling Hawaii’s unserved and underserved communities with integrated communications, including high-speed broadband, data, video, and local and long-distance voice services that keep us connected to the world. With the support of the Federal Communications Commission’s Connect America Fund, we have provided connectivity to more than 12,000 rural and neighbor island communities throughout Hawai‘i with fiber broadband since 2011.

Hawaiian Telcom supports fair market competition, increased choices for broadband consumers, and meeting digital equity needs for all in our state. We also support policies that promote the expansion of broadband infrastructure and services in unserved and underserved areas. That is why we support this legislation which helps to move the needle forward to accomplish the state’s broadband infrastructure goals while addressing needs in our unserved and underserved communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 2479.