

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO DIGITAL EQUITY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that digital equity in
2 every community across the State is essential to the well-being
3 and economic reality of the State's residents. The lack of
4 digital equity is a pressing community issue in Hawaii, and
5 isolates those in rural and socio-economically disadvantaged
6 communities. This inequality creates a digital divide, which is
7 especially exacerbated amongst the State's most vulnerable and
8 underserved populations.

9 The legislature also finds that digital equity has meant
10 the difference between an employee being able to work remotely
11 and an employee possibly facing unemployment. Additionally,
12 digital literacy and broadband access are critical tools for
13 persons seeking to access social services, such as unemployment
14 claims; supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits;
15 vital records; and other essential government, educational, and
16 medical services.



1 The legislature further finds that digital equity in the
2 State will enhance Hawaii's overall economic development and
3 education, health care, and emergency services.

4 The purpose of this Act is to establish and appropriate
5 funds for a digital navigator pilot program to offer technical
6 assistance with computers and electronic devices to residents.

7 SECTION 2. (a) The Hawaii broadband and digital equity
8 office shall establish a two-year navigator pilot program that
9 offers technical assistance with computers and electronic
10 devices for members of the public.

11 (b) The Hawaii broadband and digital equity office may
12 partner with the Hawaii state public library system and other
13 state agencies for the purposes of the pilot program.

14 (c) The digital navigator pilot program shall have two
15 locations on the island of Oahu, two locations on the island of
16 Hawaii, one location on the island of Kauai, and one location on
17 the island of Maui.

18 (d) The Hawaii broadband and digital equity office shall
19 submit a shall submit a report of the pilot program's
20 feasibility and impact, including any proposed legislation, to



1 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening
2 of the regular session of 2027.

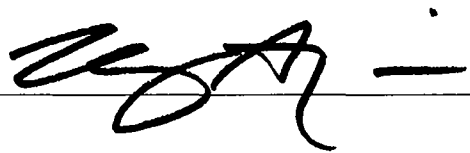
3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the broadband and
4 digital equity special fund established pursuant to Act ,
5 Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, the sum of \$ or so much
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
7 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
8 2026-2027 to establish a digital navigator pilot program
9 pursuant to this Act.

10 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii
11 broadband and digital equity office for the purposes of this
12 Act.

13 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

14

INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 1061

Report Title:

Digital Equity; Digital Navigator Pilot Program; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes and appropriates funds for a digital navigator pilot program to offer technical assistance with computers and electronic devices to residents.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

