

ACT 199

S.B. NO. 2435

A Bill for an Act Relating to Information Access.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that thousands of Hawaii residents experience disabilities such as visual impairments, dyslexia, and physical impairments that prevent them from directly accessing conventional print media. Many printed materials are available through governmental and nonprofit agencies in accessible formats such as braille, large print, or audio recording. However, the legislature finds that it is generally not practical to provide time-sensitive information such as a local daily newspaper in these specialized formats. The legislature also finds that even in a media environment where information is frequently available in multiple formats that are portable and widely accessible, telephone-based audible information access remains an important service for many individuals.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to maintain a telephone-based audible information access service.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$80,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013 to maintain a telephone-based audible information access service.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the vocational rehabilitation and services for the blind division of the department of human services for the purposes of this Act; provided that the appropriation authorized under this Act shall be expended on a contract for services with the Hawaii affiliate of a national organization that:

- (1) Has affiliates in all fifty states; and
- (2) Provides electronic services that enables blind, visually-impaired, or print-disabled persons to access newspapers, magazines, and television listings twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, by means of a touch-tone telephone, the Internet, or by downloading the electronic information to a digital talking book player or MP3 playing device.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2012.

(Approved July 3, 2012.)