



# DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Rm. 118 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • Fax (808) 586-8129 • (808) 204-2466 (VP)

## **DRAFT MINUTES** **Legislative Committee Meeting**

Location: Virtual via Zoom and 1010 Richards Street, Room 118

Date: February 20, 2026

Time: 12:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Charlotte Townsend Chairperson; Anthony Akamine, Dayne Greene, Violet Horvath, Committee members; Scott Castor Bryan Mick, Kristine Pagano, Staff

**ABSENT:** Rosanna Daniel-Kanetake, Committee member

**PUBLIC**

**PARTICIPANTS:** Peter Fritz, Donald Sakamoto

**SIGN LANGUAGE**

**INTERPRETERS:** Keri Lee, Jordan Kotani

- I. Chairperson Charlotte Townsend called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.
- II. Committee members and staff introduced themselves.
- III. Staff reported that no public testimonies were submitted.
- IV. **Bills and Resolutions**
  - A. [House Bill 2442 /Senate Bill 2936](#) – Relating to Parking for Disabled Persons. Beginning 7/1/27, increases the number of required accessible and van accessible parking spaces in parking lots with more than twenty-five parking spaces that are covered by title II or III of the Americans with Disabilities Act.  
**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)
  - B. [Senate Bill 2921](#) – Relating to State Funds. Transfers to the general fund the excess balances of various non-general funds and programs.  
**MOTION: OPPOSE** (M/S Horvath/Greene)
  - C. [House Bill 1522/Senate Bill 2727](#) – Relating to Discrimination. Lengthens the statute of limitations to file a complaint of discrimination with the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission to one year.  
**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- D. [House Bill 1997 House Draft 1/Senate Bill 2846](#) – Relating to Students with Disabilities. Authorizes the inclusion of language addressing individualized accommodations and supports during emergency situations and evacuations in individualized education programs for students with disabilities. Requires support and guidance from the Department of Education.

The Committee asked that testimony include a request for a future bill to address the needs of students with disabilities during emergency situations and evacuations at the university level.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- E. [House Bill 1999/Senate Bill 2849](#) – Relating to Public Meetings. Requires certain information to appear at the beginning of notices for public meetings.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- F. [House Bill 2000/Senate Bill 2847](#) – Relating to the Right to Repair. Establishes a right to repair for wheelchairs.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Akamine)

- G. [House Bill 1974/Senate Bill 2865](#) – Relating to Health. Requires and appropriates funds for the State Health Planning and Development Agency to develop and publish a state plan on hearing loss. SB2865 requires the Department of Health to develop and publish a state plan on hearing loss and requires reports to the Legislature prior to 2027 and 2028 regular sessions.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- H. [House Bill 1993/Senate Bill 2851](#) – Relating to Deaf Individuals. Authorizes deaf motor vehicle owners to register their vehicle as being owned by a deaf individual so that a deafness designation appears when a law enforcement officer accesses the motor vehicle's information.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- I. [House Bill 2488/Senate Bill 2414](#) – Relating to the Disability and Communication Access Board. Requires the Disability and Communication Access Board to study the health care communication needs of patients who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or deaf-blind. Requires a report to the Legislature 20 days prior to the 2027 Regular Session.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- J. [House Bill 2489/Senate Bill 2412](#) – Relating to the University of Hawaii. Appropriates moneys to establish a bachelor's degree program in American Sign Language interpretation at the University of Hawai'i Manoa campus with a multi-year plan to include a master's degree program for interpreter training.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- K. [House Bill 1668](#) – Relating to Medicaid. Requires the Department of Human Services to allow a full earned income disregard for individuals with disabilities who are between the ages of sixteen and sixty-four years when determining eligibility for Medicaid. Takes effect upon approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Akamine/Horvath)

- L. [House Bill 1891](#) – Relating to Education. Requires the Department of Education to implement dyslexia sensitive linguistically appropriate universal screenings and evidence-based interventions, offer professional development on structured literacy and evidenced-based interventions, and support pre-teacher programs in training candidates in structured literacy instruction. Appropriates funds.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- M. [Senate Bill 2281](#) – Relating to the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Health Care. Requires health care providers using artificial intelligence (AI) in patient interactions to disclose to the patient that the patient is interacting with artificial intelligence. Requires health care providers using AI in making consequential decisions relating to the patient to provide certain notice and statements to the patient; maintain a qualified AI oversight personnel who shall be a natural person that reviews, evaluates, and validates or overrides AI outputs; monitor and conduct regular performance evaluations of their AI systems; implement procedures to address identified deficiencies; and maintain certain records. Requires certain health care providers using AI to submit annual reports to the Department of Health. Requires the Department to adopt rules.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- N. [House Concurrent Resolution 9](#) / [House Resolution 10](#) - Requesting the Attorney General to conduct a comprehensive review of the Hawaii Revised Statutes to identify provisions in which the term "impaired" or a similar term is used to describe a person with a disability and to suggest disability-inclusive appropriate amendments.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- O. [House Bill 1593](#) – Relating to Affordable Housing. Requires, for any affordable rental housing development project that receives financing or any financial assistance from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, that the Corporation require the housing development lease or occupancy agreement to allow residents to own or otherwise maintain one or more common household pets.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- P. [Senate Bill 3011](#) – Relating to Public Housing. Requires the Hawaii Public Housing Authority to allow any resident of a public housing project or state low-income housing project to keep one or more pet animals in the resident's unit, subject to applicable state laws, county ordinances, and any reasonable conditions. Provides that the Hawaii Public Housing Authority may charge a refundable deposit for each pet animal but shall not impose a monthly pet fee or pet rent. Allows the Hawaii Public Housing Authority to remove a vicious animal to protect persons or property.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Townsend/Akamine)

- Q. [Senate Bill 2219](#) – Relating to Public Access. Establishes a Capitol Visitor Center within the State Capitol to be maintained and operated by the Legislative Reference Bureau. Requires the Joint Legislative Access Committee to review the operations of the Capitol Visitor Center and recommend policies to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Appropriates funds.

The Committee requested that testimony recommend the bill be amended to refer to accessibility as defined under the ADA.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- R. [Senate Bill 2543](#) – Relating to State Construction Projects. Establishes the Office of the State Construction Manager within the Department of Accounting and General Services, overseen by the State Construction Manager, to organize, manage, and oversee design review of, and issue design approvals for, state construction projects. Exempts state construction projects from county building permit, inspection, and certificate of occupancy requirements under certain circumstances, as determined by the State Construction Manager. Establishes the Design Review Special Fund and appropriates funds into and out of the fund.

**MOTION: COMMENT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- S. [Senate Bill 2811](#) – Relating to State Building Projects. Establishes the State Building Process Task Force to evaluate the challenges, opportunities, and legislative actions necessary to establish a state building permit review office for state projects located on state-owned lands. Appropriates funds.

**MOTION: COMMENT** (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- T. [House Resolution 7](#) / [House Concurrent Resolution 8](#) / [Senate Concurrent Resolution 8](#) / [Senate Resolution 10](#) - Urging the counties to act on any building permit application for modification of a residence that is prescribed by a licensed health care provider and found by the county to be essential to the safety or health of an older adult or person with a disability within forty-five days of receipt of a complete application.

The Committee requested testimony recommend the resolution be amended to add a remedy if the 45 day deadline is not met.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- U. [Senate Bill 787 Senate Draft 1](#) – Relating to the Department of Health. Appropriates funds to the Department of Health to establish and operate a free statewide mental health warm line to provide mental health support in non-emergency situations.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- V. [Senate Bill 1139 Senate Draft 1](#) – Relating to Medicaid. Directs the Department of Human Services to adopt rules to expand Medicaid eligibility to all children in the State from birth to age 5 years without regard to household income. Appropriates moneys.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- W. [House Bill 1575](#) – Relating to Access to Movement Disorder Care. Establishes a temporary Parkinson's Patient Air Transport Feasibility Committee to examine recommendations for improving access to movement disorder care for neighbor island residents, including the feasibility of a state-administered air transport assistance fund. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- X. [House Bill 1597 House Draft 1](#) – Relating to Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Research. Establishes and appropriates funds for an Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Research Center at the University of Hawai'i, including the establishment of full-time positions.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- Y. [House Bill 1674/Senate Bill 2291](#) – Relating to Family Caregiver Support. Extends child care subsidies to disabled parents or guardians, regardless of their employment status. Requires the Department of Human Services to evaluate caregiver capacity and dependent-care responsibilities when determining eligibility for medicaid home- and community-based services. Requires the Department of Human Services to update its evaluation form and functional assessment protocols related to level of care and at-risk needs determinations. Appropriates funds.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

The Committee approved all of the positions it took up to this point.

**MOTION: APPROVED** (M/S/P Townsend/Horvath)

The Committee recessed until Monday, February 23, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.

The Committee was called to order Monday, February 23, 2026, at 12:15 p.m. Committee members Anthony Akamine, Violet Horvath, and Charlotte Townsend were present.

- Z. [House Bill 1700 House Draft 1/Senate Bill 2270](#) – Relating to Housing. Includes housing projects for individuals with disabilities and individuals with access and functional needs as eligible projects to apply for expedited permits. Effective 7/2/2026. Repeals on 6/30/2031.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- AA. [House Bill 1853/Senate Bill 2269](#) – Relating to Dementia. Establishes the Hanai Memory Network Program within the Executive Office on Aging to create a network of dementia care specialists and support systems to assist individuals with dementia and their caregivers. Appropriates funds.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Akamine/Horvath)

- BB. [House Bill 1871](#) – Relating to Health. Establishes the Maternal Health Monitoring Pilot Program within the Department of Health to offer eligible participants improved maternal health care through remote patient monitoring for maternal hypertension and maternal diabetes. Appropriates funds for the pilot program.

The Committee requested that testimony recommend the bill be amended to establish this as a permanent program.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- CC. [House Bill 1889](#) – Relating to School Psychologists. Creates a School Psychologists Working Group within the Department of Education to recommend actionable steps or propose legislation for an immediate pathway to licensure for school psychologists that can be acted upon in 2027. Requires a report to the Legislature.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- DD. [House Bill 1969 House Draft 1/Senate Bill 2859](#) – Relating to Colorectal Cancer. Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to develop and implement a public assistance program offering state-funded colorectal screenings for certain persons. Requires coverage for all colorectal cancer screenings in the State to be consistent with the Affordable Care Act Implementation Frequently Asked Questions published by the United States Department of Labor, United States Department of Health and Human Services, and United States Department of the Treasury.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- EE. [House Bill 1973/Senate Bill 2864](#) – Relating to Health. Establishes within the Department of Health the KupunAloha program to provide in-home health care and support services to eligible participants who do not otherwise qualify for government assistance for these services. Appropriates moneys for the program.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- FF. [Senate Bill 3105](#) - Relating to the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact. Authorizes the Governor to enter the PA Licensure Compact to create a comprehensive process that complements the existing licensing authority of the state medical board and provides a streamlined process that allows a PA to become licensed in multiple states, thereby enhancing the portability of a PA license and ensuring the safety of patients.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- GG. [House Bill 2360 House Draft 1](#) – Relating to Paid Family Leave. By 1/1/2029, requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits. By 1/1/2030, requires the Department to begin receiving claims and paying benefits under the program. Specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- HH. [Senate Bill 2589](#) – Relating to Alzheimer’s Disease. Establishes within the Executive Office on Aging the Hawaii Assistance for the Navigation of Alzheimer’s Intervention (HANAI) program to support individuals in the State who have Alzheimer’s disease. Appropriates moneys for the establishment of 4 full-time equivalent state dementia care specialist positions, one in each county and other expenses.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Akamine)

- II. [Senate Bill 2612](#) – Relating to Medication Administration in Schools. Clarifies that the Department of Education and its employees and agents shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability arising from assisting students with the administration of medication under certain circumstances.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- JJ. [Senate Bill 2733](#) – Relating to Liquor. Requires an advertisement for liquor or alcohol to include a cancer-risk warning. Establishes guidelines for cancer-risk warnings included in advertisements for liquor or alcohol. Establishes penalties for an advertiser that fails to include a compliant cancer-risk warning in an advertisement for liquor or alcohol. Effective 1/1/2027.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- KK. [Senate Bill 3045](#) – Relating to Health Insurance. Requires all health insurers in the State, including Medicaid managed care programs, to cover the cost of continuous glucose monitors and related supplies under certain conditions. Applies to insurance policies, contracts, plans, or agreements issued or renewed in the State after 12/31/2026.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Akamine)

- LL. [Senate Bill 3199](#) – Relating to Mental Health. Establishes the Mental Health Emerging Therapies Task Force to prepare the State for the integration of breakthrough therapies, expansion of pathways for clinical trials and clinical research, and development of policy recommendations for safe, ethical, and culturally informed implementation of emerging therapies. Requires reports to the Legislature. Sunsets 6/30/2028.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

Committee member Dayne Greene joined the meeting.

- MM. [Senate Concurrent Resolution 4](#) - Requesting the Auditor to Assess Both the Social and Financial Effects of Proposed Mandated Health Insurance Coverage for Annual Mental Health Wellness Examinations.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- NN. [House Bill 2186 /Senate Bill 2695 Senate Draft 1](#) – Relating to Pedestrian Safety. Clarifies driver's obligations at crosswalks. Requires drivers to stop and remain stopped for pedestrians in crosswalks. Strengthens penalties for traffic violations, particularly in school zones. Creates additional criminal penalties when pedestrians suffer bodily injury. Provides heightened protections for blind and visually impaired pedestrians.

The Committee requested staff research what word should replace “impaired” and that testimony recommend the bill be amended as such.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Akamine/Townsend)

- OO. [House Bill 2375 House Draft 1](#) – Relating to Towing Practices. Establishes a Uniform Towing Practices for Public Parking Facilities Working Group within the Department of Transportation to examine existing state and county laws, ordinances, rules, and administrative practices relating to towing from public parking facilities and develop recommendations for uniform standards applicable to towing from state and county parking facilities. Requires a report to the Legislature.

The Committee requested the testimony ask for DCAB to be included in the working group.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Greene)

- PP. [House Bill 1976 House Draft 1/Senate Bill 2867](#) – Relating to Dementia. Requires the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, fire chiefs, Law Enforcement Standards Board, and Department of Health to provide or require the provision of at least 1 hour of dementia-specific training for first responders, including law enforcement officers, fire first responders, and emergency medical services personnel. Requires the Executive Office on Aging to review and recommend dementia-specific training curricula that address the recognition and signs of Alzheimer's disease and related types of dementia.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Akamine/Townsend)

- QQ. [House Bill 2173/Senate Bill 2934](#) – Relating to Ambulances. Appropriates funds to the Department of Health to purchase of one advanced life support ambulance and related equipment to be based in central Maui, fund pay-related personnel costs for state-certified emergency medical services personnel, and increase the predictability and stability of available air ambulance services for all islands in the State.

**MOTION: SUPPORT** (M/S Townsend/Akamine)

- RR. [House Bill 2508/Senate Bill 3203](#) – Relating to Air Medical Services. Establishes the Statewide Air Medical Services Program within the Department of Health, Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention Systems Branch to coordinate and strengthen air medical services. Provides for an air medical director, an air medical program manager, and an air medical coordinator. Provides for annual licensure and accreditation fees to be deposited into the Emergency Medical Services Special Fund for costs of the program.

**MOTION: MONITOR** (M/S Townsend/Greene)

The Committee approved all of the positions it took today.

**MOTION: APPROVED** (M/S/P Greene/Akamine)

- V. The meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

BRYAN K. MICK