



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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MINUTES

Legislative Committee Meeting

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

Date: January 26, 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, Gerald Isobe, Donald Sakamoto

SIGN LANGUAGE

INTERPRETERS: Carrie Kaufman, Keri Lee

- I. Chairperson Charlotte Townsend called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.
- II. Committee members and staff introduced themselves.
- III. Staff reported that no public testimonies were submitted.
- IV. Review of 2026 Legislative calendars and legislative process.

Staff mentioned several important upcoming dates including the bill introduction deadline of January 28, 2026, the triple referral deadlines of February 11, 2026 (House) and February 12, 2026 (Senate), and first lateral deadline of February 20, 2026.

V. Bills and Resolutions

- A. [Senate Bill 2268](#) – Relating to Equity. Requires all places of public accommodation and public entity construction projects constructed after 7/31/2027 to provide universal changing accommodations that are equally accessible regardless of gender.

Staff commented the Committee has supported similar bills in the past.

MOTION: SUPPORT (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- B. [Senate Bill 2275](#) – Relating to Persons with Disabilities. Requires the Department of Human Services to establish a Medicaid buy-in program for workers with disabilities. Requires the Department to adopt rules.

Staff commented this is a bill championed by the State Developmental Disabilities Council, and DCAB has supported similar bills in prior sessions.

MOTION: SUPPORT (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- C. [Senate Bill 2305](#) – Relating to Identification. Allows applicants for driver's permit, driver's license, or civil identification cards to request a nonapparent disability notation on their permit, license, or identification card.

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

- D. [Senate Bill 2340](#) – Relating to Community Care Foster Family Homes. Clarifies that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who meet an intermediate care facility or nursing facility level of care shall not be denied residency in a licensed community care foster family home solely because of their disability or enrollment in a specific medicaid waiver program.

Staff commented there is an identical bill [House Bill 1731](#).

MOTION: SUPPORT (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

- E. [Senate Bill 2366](#) – Relating to Parking for Persons with Disabilities. Amends the fee exemption period for individuals possessing a disabled paid parking exemption permit from the first 2.5 hours or the maximum amount of time the meter allows, whichever is longer, to the first 4.5 hours.

MOTION: SUPPORT (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- F. [House Bill 1531/Senate Bill 2121](#) – Relating to Emergency Announcements. Requires the Governor or mayor of a county to provide an American Sign Language interpreter during each official announcement broadcast via television or the Internet during a state of emergency. Requires the Governor or mayor of a county to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that the American Sign Language interpreter's face, body, arms, and hands are visible during the broadcast. Requires a news media outlet to display the American Sign Language interpreter in a picture-in-picture window during broadcasts of official emergency announcements.

Committee member Violet Horvath mentioned that some broadcasts make the picture in picture (PIP) so small it's hard to see on smaller screens. Committee Chairperson Charlotte Townsend asked staff to research what might be an appropriate minimum size for the PIP and to incorporate their findings into DCAB's testimony.

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

- G. [Senate Bill 2267](#) – Relating to 911 Services. Requires the 911 Board to establish, implement, and maintain a statewide emergency safety profile system that allows residents to voluntarily create and manage secure personal profiles containing information relevant to emergency responses.

Staff commented this has a companion: [House Bill 1577](#).

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

- H. [Senate Bill 2385](#) – Relating to Disaster Services. Amends the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency's functions to include ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and related federal and state disability access laws by integrating the needs of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs into emergency planning, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities. Appropriates funds to establish a Disability Integration Specialist and for programming support for disability community projects.

MOTION: SUPPORT (M/S Horvath/Townsend)

- I. [Senate Bill 2209](#) – Relating to Rental Discrimination. Allows the court to award attorneys' fees to a prevailing party in an action relating to discriminatory practices in a rental transaction based on source of income.

MOTION: MONITOR (M/S Akamine/Horvath)

- J. [Senate Bill 2210](#) – Relating to Housing Discrimination. Allows the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission to prosecute discrimination based on source of income in housing cases.

MOTION: MONITOR (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- K. [Senate Bill 2213](#) – Relating to Environmental Protection. Requires the Department of Education to establish a statewide Environmental Stewardship Curricula Plan for public schools for certain students. Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, requires public schools to offer an environmental stewardship course for certain students. Requires the Department of Education to establish and administer sustainability programs, including recycling and composting programs, to be implemented at public schools. Beginning 7/1/27, prohibits the use or distribution of single-use plastic utensils, trays, straws, and other disposable plastic food service products in public school cafeterias. Beginning 7/1/28, requires each public school to have at least one operational refillable water bottle filling station accessible to students and staff. Requires reports to the Board of Education and the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

No motion was made to take a position on this bill.

- L. [Senate Bill 2222](#) – Relating to Mental Health. Requires the Department of Education to identify as an excused absence any absence due to the student's mental or behavioral health. Limits the number of excused absences due to mental or behavioral health that a student may take per academic year. Exempts an absence due to the student's mental or behavioral health from the enforcement of penalties relating to compulsory school attendance.

Several people commented that the bill is poorly drafted, contradictory, and confusing.

MOTION: MONITOR (M/S Horvath/Greene)

- M. [Senate Bill 2347](#) – Relating to the Residential Landlord-Tenant Code. Requires the Office of Consumer Protection to periodically publish an accessible, multilingual notice of tenant rights. Requires a landlord to provide a tenant with a copy of the notice of tenant rights.

Staff commented there is a companion [House Bill 1776](#). DCAB often receives calls from landlords or from tenants with a disability who are not sure what their rights and obligations are under state law.

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

- N. [Senate Bill 2348](#) – Relating to Cardiovascular Screening. Requires cardiovascular screening for students, including student athletes. Requires the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health, to distribute educational and informational materials regarding sudden cardiac arrest. Requires the Department of Education to implement policies, programs, training, and continuing education that increase health care provider knowledge of cardiovascular screening guidelines.

MOTION: MONITOR (M/S Horvath/Akamine)

- O. [Senate Bill 2364](#) – Relating to Home Care Agencies. Prohibits a home care agency or person with a financial interest in the home care agency from providing home care services to a client if the home care agency or person owns or leases the client's residence.

Staff explained there is a licensing requirement for residential care homes that some companies are getting around by being both the landlord who rents a room to someone and the agency which is providing in home care services to the tenant.

MOTION: MONITOR (M/S Townsend/Greene)

- P. [Senate Bill 2365](#) – Relating to Community-Based Care. Requires the Department of Health to adopt rules mandating that each primary caregiver

and substitute caregiver in a Community Care Foster Family Home be a licensed nurse or certified nurse aide. Makes the requirements for primary and substitute caregivers applicable to all Community Care Foster Family Homes, regardless of the number of clients in the home.

MOTION: MONITOR (M/S Townsend/Horvath)

The Committee approved all of the positions it took at this meeting.

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

VI. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 2, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.

VII. The meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

BRYAN K. MICK