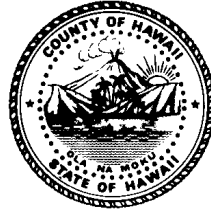


**Harry Kim**  
*Mayor*



**Wil Okabe**  
*Managing Director*

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*Deputy Managing Director*

## County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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March 11, 2019

Senator Laura H. Thielen, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Committee on Government Operations

Dear Chair Thielen, Vice Chair Inouye, and Committee Members:

**RE: HB 1153, HD1 Relating to Remote Testimony in Legislative Hearings**

Article I, Section 1, of the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i provides that "All political power of this State is inherent in the people and the responsibility for the exercise thereof rests with the people." In that spirit, and over the course of its history, the Hawai'i State Legislature has been dedicated to assuring citizen participation in its activities, and has often been at the forefront of innovations that enhance that participation and make it more effective.

Technology has now reached the point where persons with disabilities, residents of rural Oahu, and neighbor island residents, can be enabled to more fully participate in the legislative process without experiencing inconvenient, expensive and/or time-consuming travel to the Capitol. Exactly how that should be done, without jeopardizing the need for an expeditious legislative process, may require further thought and deliberations, and that is exactly what HB 1153, HD1 would allow. HB 1153, HD1 does not presuppose a method, but neither is it just another "study." Truly action oriented, it mandates the outcome that remote testimony shall be allowed, and then leaves it to each house to figure out the details. That is the kind of balance that this Legislature is known for and can be proud of.

An earlier generation of Hawai'i leaders recognized that all residents of the State deserve equal educational opportunities, regardless of where they live. Now today's generation of leaders is better assuring that all have equal access to their government. Thank you for taking this next step.

I hope you will approve HB 1153, HD1.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim  
MAYOR