WHEREAS, "digital equity" is the condition in which all Hawaii residents, keiki to kupuna, have the information technology capacity to participate fully in our society, democracy, and economy, including civics, social and cultural activities, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services; and

WHEREAS, digital equity requires ubiquitous and affordable access to broadband and the internet, digital tools, and the knowledge to thrive in an increasingly digital world; and

WHEREAS, the "digital divide," also known as "digital inequity," has been a pressing community issue for many years now, separating those in rural communities and those from socioeconomically disadvantaged circumstances from the rest of modern society; and

WHEREAS, a lack of adequate broadband infrastructure, internet-capable devices, affordable high-quality broadband service, and technological know-how creates inequitable digital access; and

WHEREAS, digital infrastructure investments have faced challenges with misinformation within our communities about the effects of those technologies; and

WHEREAS, digital inequity is rapidly emerging through racial, economic, and geographical boundaries and is amplified among Hawaii's most vulnerable and underserved populations; and

WHEREAS, stay-at-home and work-from-home orders related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus have made digital connectivity a necessity across all economic sectors and demographics; and
WHEREAS, the need for social distancing related to the
SARS-CoV-2 virus has forced many social functions to occur
online; and

WHEREAS, those without digital connectivity may become
socially isolated, lonely, and suffer from mental health issues;
and

WHEREAS, Hawaii's high unemployment rate during the SARS-
CoV-2 pandemic has led to families cutting home internet
subscriptions in order to prioritize food and rent expenses; and

WHEREAS, the lack of internet access disproportionately
affects native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander communities,
with the percentage of those households without internet access
being almost double that of the state population as whole; and

WHEREAS, in 1824 King Kamehameha III, Kauikeaouli,
proclaimed "He aupuni palapala ko' u (mine is a kingdom of
literacy)." The King's appreciation for the written language
and education resulted in extremely high literacy rates among
native Hawaiians. Today, Hawaii finds itself in a similar
situation where society must adopt a new form of digital
literacy to succeed in a digital age; and

WHEREAS, a pivot towards this new form of digital literacy
will empower Hawaii's residents to realize their full potential;
and

WHEREAS, the Broadband Hui is a multi-sector conglomerate
of public and private organizations and individuals whose months
of thoughtful conversations led to the compilation of well-
articulated visions and goals known as the Digital Equity
Declaration for Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, the Digital Equity Declaration is published on the
Broadband Hui's website: www.broadbandhui.org; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
of 2021, the Senate concurring, that this body supports and
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adopts the goals set forth in the Digital Equity Declaration that was adopted by the Broadband Hui; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the goals of the Digital Equity Declaration support the Aloha+ Challenge, Hawaii's statewide sustainability framework, and will be reflected in the Aloha+ Dashboard and updated regularly to track progress; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to Hawaii's congressional delegation; Governor of the State of Hawaii; Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu; Mayor of Maui County; Mayor of Hawaii County; Mayor of Kauai County; Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; Director of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Superintendent of the Department of Education; Chairpersons of each county council; President of the University of Hawaii; Chief Executive Officer of Kamehameha Schools; Executive Director of Hawaii Green Growth; and Chairperson of the Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii.

OFFERED BY: [Signature]
MAR 12 2021