

HAWAII

Live, From Honolulu, It's Capitol On Demand!

The Hawaii State Public Access Network — HSPAN — aims to make legislative proceedings easier to view, possibly encouraging greater participation in government.

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creators say “will significantly increase” the coverage of state Capitol activities available to the public.

As Civil Beat reported [earlier this month](#), the idea behind the Hawaii State Public Access Network is to provide greater transparency and openness when it comes to government proceedings, especially since the programming can be watched whenever the viewer desires.

HSPAN — that is, Channel 50 via [Oceanic Time Warner Cable](#) — was launched Tuesday at a press conference at the Capitol attended by legislative leaders.

“What a wonderful day for all Hawaii,” said Senate Majority Leader Kalani English.

“We’ve worked hard for this for years.”



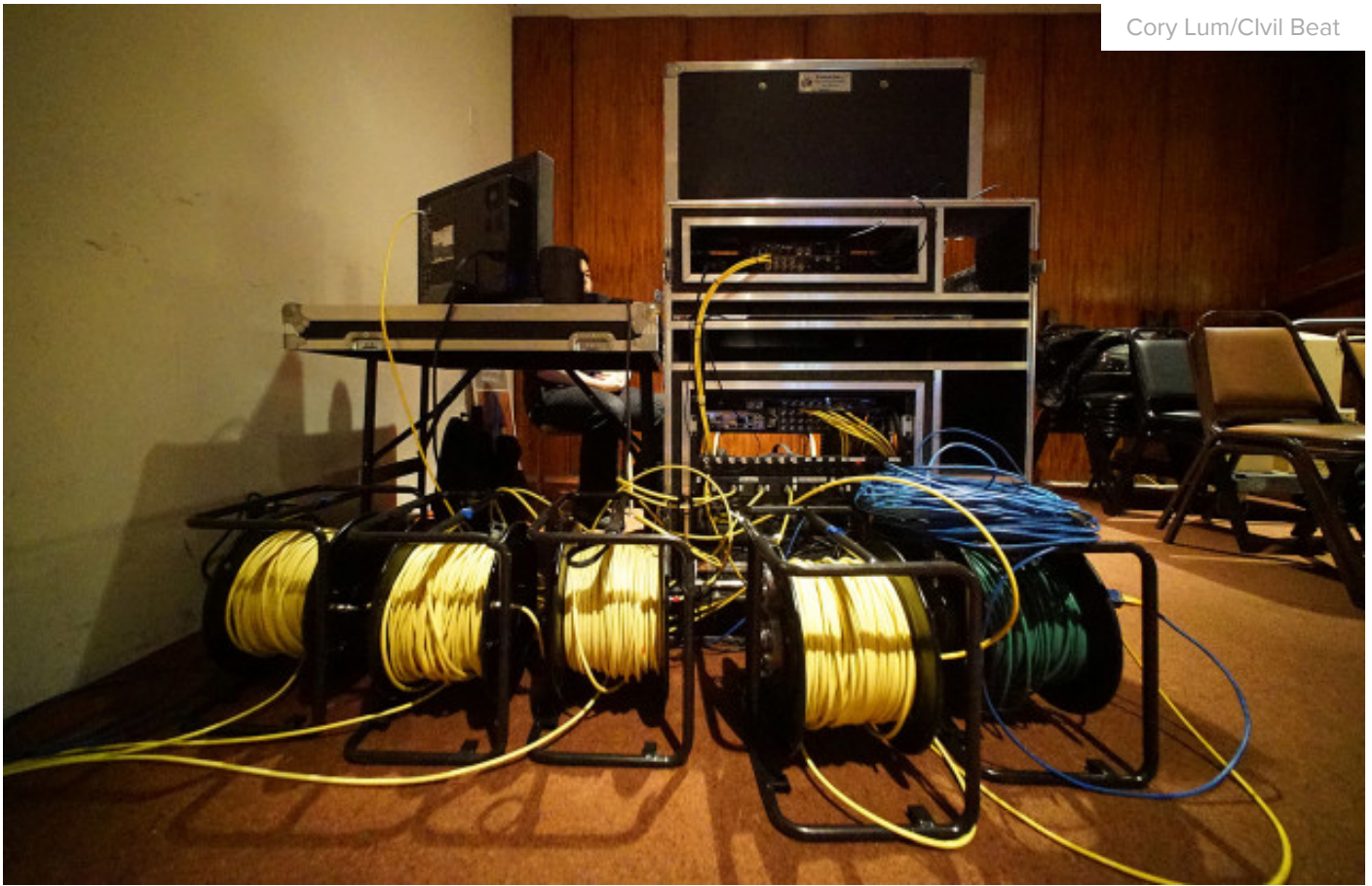
President and CEO Sanford Inouye of Olelo Community Media unveils HSPAN at the Capitol Auditorium.

English called HSPAN “government raw,” meaning unfiltered coverage of committee hearings and floor sessions.

Anyone who has watched such proceedings knows how valuable they can be in understanding how the Legislature works — and how it’s not always pretty. Tempers can flare, and testimony can be heated.

English said that he hoped the new platform would lead to lawmakers getting more input, but “in a nice, calm way.”

House Speaker Joe Souki said that with HSPAN “the whole state can enjoy — or not enjoy” what goes on during session, a comment that got chuckles from the Capitol Auditorium audience.



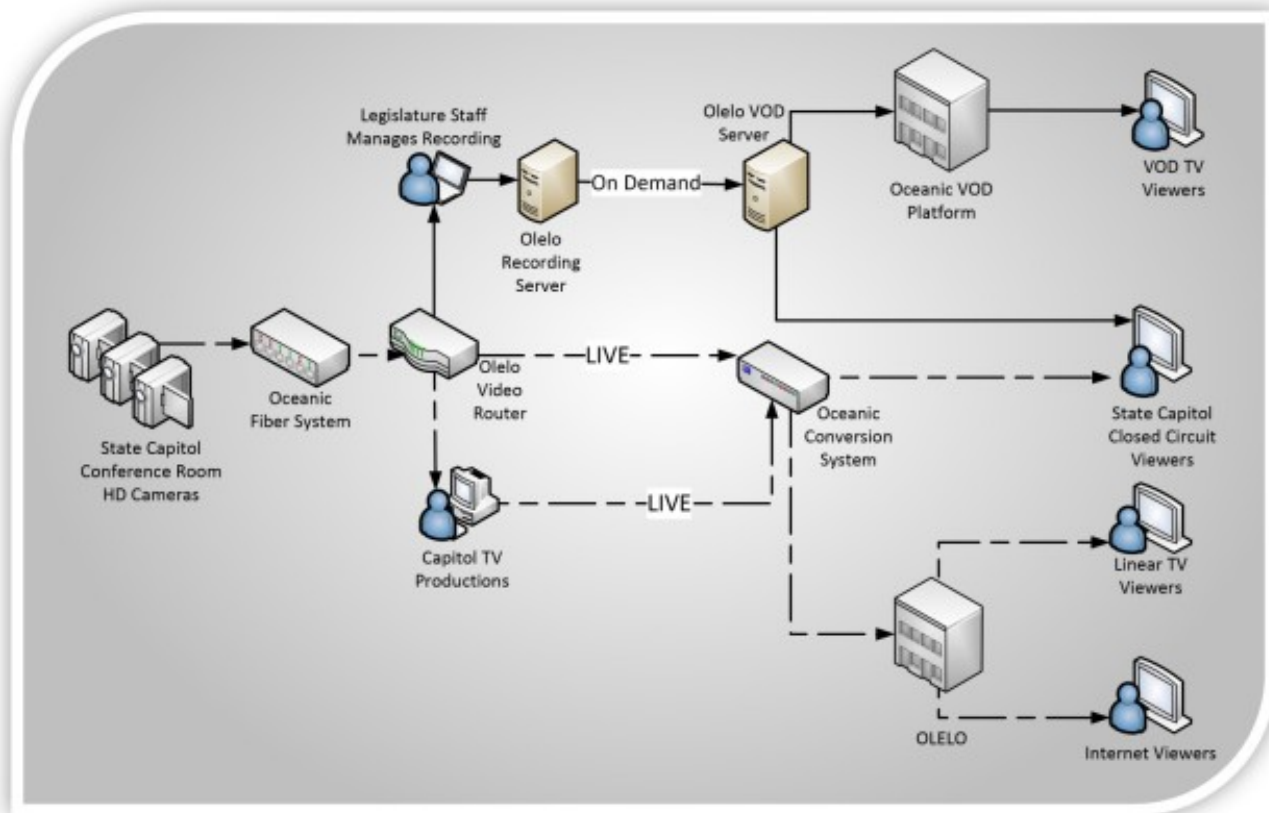
The Capitol Auditorium and 16 conference rooms are wired for broadcast.

HSPAN is a creation of the Legislature, [Olelo Community Media](#), Oceanic Time Warner Cable and the state [Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs](#), said Olelo President and CEO Sanford Inouye.

In addition to legislative hearings, the state executive offices, executive branch agencies and the Judiciary will have access to provide content on HSPAN.

“Stay tuned,” said Inouye.

New remote-controlled Sony HD cameras were installed in 16 conference rooms at the Capitol, in both the House and Senate Chambers and the Auditorium. This allows for multiple hearings to be captured simultaneously and distributed on HSPAN.

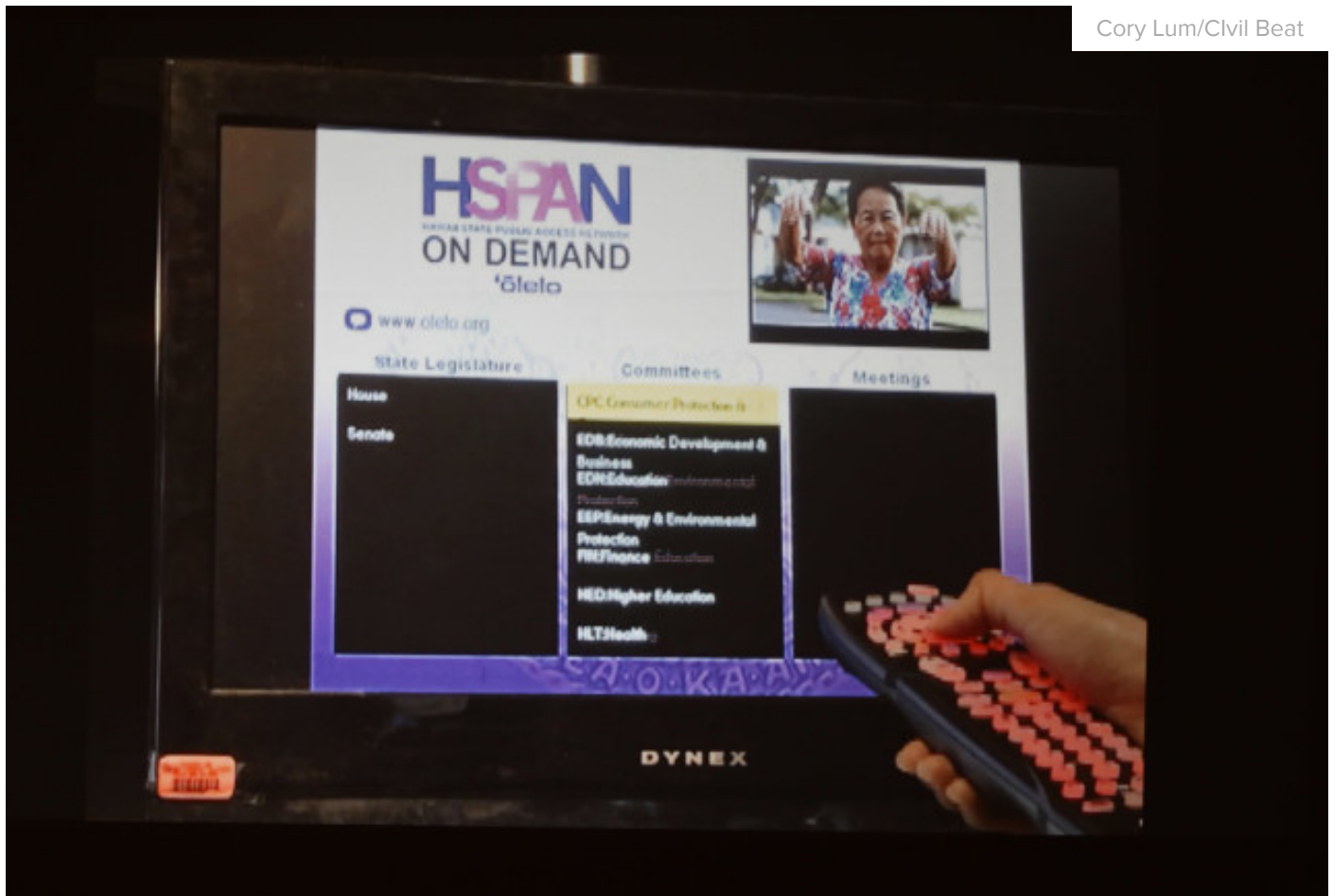


Olelo partnered with Oceanic and the state to design and build the infrastructure, while Oceanic provided fiber optic cable throughout the Capitol to connect audio, video and data lines for the remote camera controls to a control room.

House and Senate clerks offices and IT information technology staff members created the recording and uploading functions.

The new on-demand channel comes in addition to the live coverage currently provided by [Capitol TV](#), which airs on Olelo Channels 49 and 54, and other community access stations across the state.

Because Hawaii is an island chain, it can be very difficult for neighbor island residents to follow what goes on at the Capitol. Same goes for people in rural Oahu, who may not want to drive in to town to attend a hearing or briefing.



Hello, HSPAN.

And people holding down 9-to-5 jobs can't always just stop work to turn on the TV when legislative events are streaming live.

HSPAN operators are still working with upload and download speeds. Expect some startup glitches.

There is also the question of whether HSPAN will be provided online so that people can access it through computers, laptops and smart phones.

“The program has good potential, but in order to reach a younger demographic, you might want to think about making HSPAN more easily accessing and available online,” said Carmille Lim, executive director of [Common Cause Hawaii](#).

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