
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII STUDY THE COST AND
FEASIBILITY OF USING AVATAR TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOP LAPTOP
COMPUTERS FOR INSTANTANEOUS TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION
SYSTEMS FOR THE DEAF AND HEARING-IMPAIRED.

1 WHEREAS, there is a serious shortage of qualified American
2 Sign Language interpreters in Hawaii; and

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4 WHEREAS, the shortage of sign language interpreters affects
5 the State's ability to meet its obligations under the Americans
6 with Disabilities Act; and

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8 WHEREAS, the shortage and high cost of qualified sign
9 language interpreters places severe limits on the employability
10 of the deaf and hearing-impaired, and on their ability to
11 participate equally in public life; and

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13 WHEREAS, the inability of the deaf and hearing-impaired to
14 participate fully in public life raises costs for all
15 disability-related services and reduces tax revenue from persons
16 who could otherwise be gainfully employed; and

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18 WHEREAS, the Disability and Communication Access Board
19 within the Department of Health is charged with reviewing and
20 assessing the problems, and serving as a public advocate for the
21 needs, of persons with disabilities; and

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23 WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii is a leader in languages
24 and computer science and has excellent resources in these areas
25 that can be used locally to address the problems for the deaf
26 and hearing-impaired caused by the shortage of qualified sign
27 language interpreters; and

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29 WHEREAS, private business interests are already working
30 with three-dimensional animation ("Avatars") that could be
31 developed into "interpreter-in-a-laptop" products deployed in
32 EVDO-enabled laptop computers; and



1 WHEREAS, dynamic public-private partnerships between the
 2 University of Hawaii and private business partners could
 3 expedite the development and application of Avatar technology
 4 for sign language translation and interpretation; and

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 6 WHEREAS, instantaneous English-American Sign Language
 7 translation and interpretation systems should find a ready
 8 market if they could be distributed as needed in a portable
 9 laptop platform; now, therefore,

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 11 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
 12 Twenty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
 13 of 2006, the Senate concurring, that the University of Hawaii is
 14 requested to study the technological feasibility, cost, and
 15 market potential of using Avatar technology to develop laptop
 16 computers for sign-language translation and interpretation
 17 systems for the deaf and hearing-impaired; and

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 19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Hawaii is
 20 requested to report its findings and recommendations to the
 21 Legislature at least twenty days before the convening of the
 22 Regular Session of 2007; and

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 24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 25 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to President of the
 26 University of Hawaii, the Director of Health, the Director of
 27 Human Services, and the Director of Labor and Industrial
 28 Relations.

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OFFERED BY:

Mel Carroll
Mel Carroll

Alvin A. Auekai
Alvin A. Auekai

Josh Green
Josh Green

Kirk Caldwell
Kirk Caldwell

Tony Watt
Tony Watt

BJ
BJ

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