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## HOUSE 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

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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, that the University of Hawaii is requested to study the  
14 technological feasibility, cost, and market potential of using  
15 Avatar technology to develop laptop computers for sign-language  
16 translation and interpretation systems for the deaf and  
17 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 Resolution be transmitted to President of the University of  
26 Hawaii, the Director of Health, the Director of Human Services,  
27 and the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations.  
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OFFERED BY:

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MAR 15 2006

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