

Honolulu, Hawaii

March 3, 2006

RE: H.B. No. 2778  
H.D. 2

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Twenty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2006  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Finance, to which was referred H.B. No. 2778, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to provide for effective and timely communication between all levels of government and individuals who are precluded from using public services due to language proficiency barriers.

The County of Maui Department of the Prosecuting Attorney Victim/Witness Assistance Division, National Association of Social Workers, Na Loio Immigrant Rights and Public Interest Legal Center, Hawaii Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inter-Agency Council for Immigrant Services, Hawaii Interpreter Action Network, Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and Legal Hotline, American Cancer Society Hawaii Pacific, Inc., Ilokos Norte Aid Association, Sakada Foundation, Laoag City Circle of Hawaii, National Foundation of Filipino American Associations Region XII, United Filipino Council of Hawaii, Philippine Nurses Association-Hawaii Chapter, Filipino Association of University Women, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness, Research and Training, Oahu Filipino Community Council, Gumil Hawaii, Filipino Social Workers of Hawaii, Philippine International Society, and numerous concerned individuals submitted testimony in support of this bill. The Judiciary, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Department of Health, Department of Human

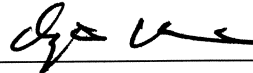


Resources Development, Disability and Communications Access Board, and Catholic Charities Hawaii supported the intent of this measure. The Hawaii Civil Rights Commission supported this bill with amendments. The Department of the Attorney General and Legislative Reference Bureau provided comments.

While your Committee notes that there are problematic aspects to consider, it is also interested in using this measure as a vehicle to advance the concept that government should be accessible to all people regardless of their language abilities. As a nation of immigrants and especially here in a state known as "The Melting Pot of the Pacific," it is especially important that our government remain cognizant of the need to provide opportunities for all who choose to come to Hawaii.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Finance that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2778, H.D. 2, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Finance,



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DWIGHT TAKAMINE, Chair



