

Honolulu, Hawaii

Feb 15, 2008

RE: H.B. No. 2575
H.D. 2

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2008
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services & Housing, to which was referred H.B. No. 2575, H.D. 1, entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to make government more easily accessible to individuals with limited English proficiency by:

- (1) Clarifying and expanding definitions in Hawaii's language access law;
- (2) Expanding the membership of the Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC) to include a member from each county in the state; and
- (3) Appropriating \$189,500 for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a statewide language access bank to ensure access to services.

The Office of Language Access, Congress of Visayan Organizations, Big Island Filipino Community Council, Filipino American Citizens League, National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region XII, Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc., Oahu Filipino Community Council, Philippine Nurses Association-Hawaii, United Filipino Council of Hawaii, and Filipino Coalition for Solidarity testified in support of this bill. The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supported the intent of this



measure. The Hawaii Interpreter Action Network supported this bill with amendments.

Your Committee respectfully urges stakeholders to work together to discuss the possibility and feasibility of including American Sign Language as a language covered by the Office of Language Access for those individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Your Committee has amended this bill by:

- (1) Changing the term "language access bank" to "language resource coordinating center";
- (2) Adding a DCAB representative as an ex-officio member of LAAC; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services & Housing that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2575, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2575, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services &
Housing,



MAILE SHIMABUKURO, Chair



