
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A STUDY ON THE AVAILABILITY OF AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS.

1 WHEREAS, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters work as
2 freelance interpreters to provide communication access between
3 hearing and deaf or hard of hearing individuals; and
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5 WHEREAS, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the
6 Blind Division of the Department of Human Services and the
7 Disability and Communication Access Board prepared a report
8 entitled "Shortage of ASL-English Interpreters in the State of
9 Hawaii" in November 2000; and
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11 WHEREAS, the 2000 report identified job security,
12 consistency of income, stability of schedule, benefits, and
13 professional development as priorities for working interpreters;
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16 WHEREAS, the 2000 report recommended increasing the pool of
17 qualified interpreters in Hawaii to improve communication access
18 for deaf and hard of hearing persons; and
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20 WHEREAS, the Disability and Communication Access Board is a
21 state agency that issues administrative rules for the
22 utilization of communication access services (e.g., sign
23 language interpreters, real-time captioners, and computer-
24 assisted notetakers) and determines the qualifications of
25 interpreters and the credentialing of interpreters who do not
26 hold national certification via a state screening process; and
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28 WHEREAS, the Disability and Communication Access Board has
29 developed and implements a state test, the Hawaii Quality
30 Assurance System (HQAS), for individuals who wish to obtain a
31 state credential to work as an ASL sign language interpreter in
32 the State of Hawaii but who do not seek national certification;
33 and



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2 WHEREAS, on average, only eight to twelve individuals per
3 year take and pass the Disability and Communication Access Board
4 HQAS test; and

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6 WHEREAS, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the
7 Blind Division has contracted for statewide interpreter referral
8 services with a private agency, Hawaii Interpreting Services,
9 LLC, which has experienced significant difficulty in securing
10 ASL interpreters for community freelance interpreting
11 assignments; and

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13 WHEREAS, state agencies, especially agencies that are heavy
14 users of interpreter services, such as the Vocational
15 Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division of the
16 Department of Human Services and the University of Hawaii, are
17 also having difficulty meeting their obligations to provide
18 communication access to deaf and hard of hearing individuals;
19 and

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21 WHEREAS, the lack of ASL interpreters seriously impacts the
22 lives of persons who are deaf in obtaining and maintaining jobs,
23 affecting their health, safety, and interactions of daily life;
24 and

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26 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii has an Interpreter Education
27 and Training Program at Kapiolani Community College whose
28 purpose, in part, is to train students to become working
29 interpreters to increase the pool of available ASL interpreters
30 in the State of Hawaii; and

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32 WHEREAS, although the Kapiolani Community College
33 Interpreter Education and Training Program has offered many
34 classes to individuals who have increased their proficiency in
35 ASL and has promoted the advancement of educational assistants
36 in the school system with sign language interpreting skills, the
37 number of graduates who have become working freelance
38 interpreters has not increased in the community; now, therefore,

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40 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
41 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
42 of 2010, the Senate concurring, that the Legislative Reference
43 Bureau is requested to conduct a study to determine what
44 barriers (rates, benefits, reimbursement mechanisms, etc.) in



1 existing law, rules, regulations, or policies exist to securing
2 more ASL community interpreting hours; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disability and
5 Communication Access Board and Hawaii Interpreting Services,
6 LLC, are requested to assist the Legislative Reference Bureau in
7 surveying ASL interpreters currently working in the State of
8 Hawaii; and

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study provide
11 recommendations as to statutory changes that might be enacted
12 and administrative or program changes that might be implemented
13 to increase the availability of ASL interpreters, including but
14 not limited to changes in areas such as:

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16 (1) The Disability and Communication Access Board;

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18 (2) Title 11, chapter 218, Hawaii Administrative Rules;

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20 (3) The HQAS test;

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22 (4) The Kapiolani Community College Interpreter Education
23 and Training Program; and

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25 (5) The Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the
26 Blind Division Interpreter Referral Contract; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
29 Bureau is requested to consult with the Disability and
30 Communication Access Board, the Vocational Rehabilitation and
31 Services for the Blind Division, Kapiolani Community College
32 Interpreter Education Program, Hawaii Interpreting Services,
33 LLC, Hawaii Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Purple
34 Communications, and user groups of ASL interpreting services in
35 formulating recommendations; and

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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
38 Bureau submit its findings and recommendations to the
39 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
40 the 2011 Regular Session; and

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42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
43 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Executive Director
44 of the Disability and Communication Access Board, the



1 Administrator of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for
2 the Blind Division, the Chancellor of the Kapiolani Community
3 College, the Hawaii Interpreting Services, LLC, the
4 Administrator of the Hawaii Registry of Interpreters for the
5 Deaf, and the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau.

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