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## SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH APPROPRIATE REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS IN THE DEPARTMENT WHO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING BOTH THOSE WHO HEAR AND THOSE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING, TO INCORPORATE THE USE OF SIGN LANGUAGE AND OTHER MEANS OF COMMUNICATION DURING INSTRUCTION TO ENHANCE THEIR STUDENTS' LEARNING.

1 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has a departmental  
2 duty under section 302A-436, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to provide  
3 exceptional children, which includes students with disabilities,  
4 residing in the State with instruction, special facilities, and  
5 special services for education, therapy, and training to enable  
6 them to live normal competitive lives; and  
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8 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has studied and made  
9 recommendations in the past on ways to improve the development  
10 and learning of children with disabilities; and  
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12 WHEREAS, the Department of Education submitted a report to  
13 the Legislature in 2007 entitled "Educational Implications of  
14 the Special Needs of Preschool Age Children with Developmental  
15 Disabilities: Report to the 24th Legislature, 2007" that  
16 provides the following recommendations:  
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18 (1) The development of a child's communication skills  
19 should be an ongoing process that is incorporated into  
20 all activities by professionals and by the child's  
21 family during the course of the intervention and  
22 during all daily activities;  
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24 (2) A total communication program (sign language, oral  
25 communication, and visual cues) should be used to  
26 facilitate the development of expressive language;  
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28 (3) When using a total communication approach, it is  
29 important that the sign language system be one that  
30 can be used simultaneously with spoken English (or  
31 other language spoken in the home) and that the child



1 receives speech or language therapy to support and  
2 enhance speech production and oral communication;

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4 (4) It is important for parents and professionals to  
5 recognize that the use of sign language should not  
6 interfere with oral language development; and

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8 (5) When sign language is included as a communication  
9 strategy, it is important that the families,  
10 caregivers, and those working with a child learn the  
11 same signs and are encouraged to use the signs and  
12 that the signs and oral vocabulary being taught have  
13 practical, functional, and cultural value to the  
14 family; and

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16 WHEREAS, despite the findings and recommendations outlined  
17 in the Department's 2007 report, the Department's existing  
18 procedures limit the provision of sign language interpretation  
19 services to children who are deaf or hard of hearing; and

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21 WHEREAS, according to the findings and recommendations in  
22 the Department's 2007 report to the Legislature, students who  
23 are not deaf or hard of hearing should also receive instruction  
24 in sign language as part of a total communication program; and

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26 WHEREAS, individuals are required to possess certain  
27 qualifications and certifications in order to serve as sign  
28 language interpreters for the Department, and there is a  
29 shortage of sign language interpreters available to assist  
30 students with disabilities in the State; and

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32 WHEREAS, providing sign language interpreters in the  
33 Department with training to allow them to work with children who  
34 hear would apply the total communication approach to these  
35 children, providing them with a greater opportunity for  
36 learning; now, therefore,

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38 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth  
39 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010,  
40 that the Department of Education is urged to establish  
41 appropriate requirements for individuals in the Department who  
42 provide instruction to children with disabilities, including  
43 both those who hear and those who are deaf or hard of hearing,  
44 to incorporate the use of sign language and other means of



1 communication during instruction to enhance their students'  
2 learning; and  
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is  
5 also urged to facilitate the professional development, training,  
6 and preparation of educational personnel, sign language  
7 interpreters, and other individuals involved with the  
8 instruction of children with disabilities, including both those  
9 who hear and those who are deaf or hard of hearing, through  
10 continuing education or other means, to use total communication  
11 and sign language skills during instruction; and  
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
14 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of  
15 Education, the Superintendent of Education, the Special  
16 Education Advisory Council, and the Hawaii Speech-Language-  
17 Hearing Association.  
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OFFERED BY: Michelle N. Kikuni (br)

