

Representative John Mizuno, Chair
Committee on Human Services
Hawaii State Capitol
415 Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 2, 201

Re: Support for HB 514 Making a Grant for the Establishment of a Comprehensive Deaf Center

Dear Chair Mizuno and members of the Committee on Human Services,

My name is Billy Kekua and I am Deaf. I represent as the Vice-President of Aloha State Association of the Deaf. I moved back here home after fourteen years of living on the East Coast and am excited to call it my home once again. I just got myself involved with the Comprehensive Deaf Center Committee along with respective members Dr. Judy Coryell, Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland and members of the Deaf community.

I have worked for a deaf human service agency in Washington D.C. for 4 years and three agencies in Philadelphia for two years. My role was to provide the support for deaf clients especially when there were some sort of communication barriers. I advocated for their rights, accompanied with them to their appointments and the such. I feel that it is necessary to have a location where all deaf members can meet up for variety of services provided for their needs. The administration and staff of the agency should be open and accessible to all deaf people who communicate in American Sign Language.

Therefore I believe that the establishment of Comprehensive Deaf Center will effective for all kinds of services such as human service programs, vocational rehabilitation, interpreting programs, and others in one location where everyone can meet and use the services in a safe environment. I ask that the reality of the CDC to be achieved with your support and I thank you for your time.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Billy Kekua
ASAD Vice-President

From: Tuesday, February 01, 2011 7:58 PM
Sent: HUS testimony
To: SLaracuente@msn.com
Cc: SLaracuente@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB514 on 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for HUS 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM HB514

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Steve Laracuente
Organization: Individual
Address: 1080 Ala Napunani St APT 204 Honolulu, HI 96818
Phone: 808-754-3099 Text Only (Deaf)
E-mail: SLaracuente@msn.com
Submitted on: 2/1/2011

Comments:

Aloha! Please support the Comprehensive Deaf Center. In times like these when we are seeing budget cuts, it most likely will be cost effective to allow the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf Blind Community help themselves by going to one place where all the services they need can be available and provided by caring professionals and individuals who can communicate with (in American Sign Language or ASL) and understand the needs of this special Community. Mahalo for "listening" to my testimony.

Steve Laracuente
Deaf Consumer;
Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind Student Services Coordinator; Recording Secretary,
Aloha State Association of the Deaf

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 02, 2011 5:08 AM
To: HUStestimony
Cc: chevy59@sprint.blackberry.net
Subject: Testimony for HB514 on 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for HUS 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM HB514

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Ed Chevy
Organization: Individual
Address: 91-537 koihala place ewa beach, hawaii 96706
Phone: 866-928-9836
E-mail: chevy59@sprint.blackberry.net
Submitted on: 2/2/2011

Comments:

I, ED CHEVY, WOULD LIKE TO TESTIFY, TO EXPRESS MY SUPPORT HB514 AND SB127.
A DEAF CENTER IS IMPORTANT TO ALL THE DEAF, HARD OF HEARING AND DEAF-BLIND OF HAWAII. THE STAGES OF ITS DEVELOPMENT ARE IMPORTANT TO US. THE DEAF CENTER WILL OFFER A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE, EVERYTHING FROM HEALTH, EDUCATION TO COUNSELING AS WELL AS PRESERVING OUR CULTURE AND A HISTORY WITH LIBRARY AND MUSEUM. IT ALSO CAN BE A SOCIAL GATHERING PLACE WHERE FOLKS CAN CARRY A FAMILY STYLE.
SINCE THE DEAF COMMUNITY WAS FIRST RECOGNIZED BACK IN THE EARLY 1900'S, THE GROWING NUMBERS NEED SERVICING, ASSISTING, TRAINING AND RECREATING FOR OUR NEEDS.
I BELIEVE THAT FOR EVERY COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD USUALLY MAKES THE WORLD GO AROUND WITH HERITAGE.
PLS CONSIDER THE MUCH-NEEDED DEAF CENTER.

Representative John Mizuno, Chair
Committee on Human Services
Hawaii State Capitol
415 Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 3, 2011

Re: Support for HB 514 Making a Grant for the Establishment of a
Comprehensive Deaf Center

Dear Chair Mizuno and members of the Committee on Human Services,

My name is Scott Cohen. I have a degree from Gallaudet University and I would like to contribute my skills I learned as a tenure student at Gallaudet, to the deaf community. The Center will provide me the opportunity to share and demonstrate my skill to my peers. The local peers will also be able to contribute their knowledge to the Center, creating mainstream network for the deaf community over the State of Hawaii. Myself, was born on Maui, flew to Oahu to learn the language of the deaf community at age 5, defined the consideration of late language development. The accessibility and accommodation create by the Center will be able to expand the service to serve the needs for the statewide deaf community. The establishment of the Comprehensive Deaf Center will provide the much-needed service to the deaf community in the State of Hawaii.

To enable people who are Deaf to have a safe environment to socialize, obtain necessary services from agencies with American Sign Language skill and are familiar with deaf people and deaf culture, I am committed to developing that in a Comprehensive Deaf Center in Hawaii. The Center will allow deaf people to be as individually as possible by providing an environment where a number of services and social activities can be provided. Please allow this center to become a reality by appropriating start up funds to begin operations and establishment of services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Scott Cohen
Kula, Maui

From:
Sent: Wednesday, February 02, 2011 8:13 AM
To: HUStestimony
Cc: judycoryell@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB514 on 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: House Testimony 2-2.docx

Testimony for HUS 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM HB514

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Judith Coryell
Organization: Individual
Address: 3045 Pualei Circle #B310 Honolulu, HI 96815
Phone: 258-8698
E-mail: judycoryell@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/2/2011

Comments:

Representative John Mizuno, Chair
Committee on Human Services
Hawaii State Capitol
415 Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 2, 2011

Re: Support for HB 514 Making a Grant for the Establishment of a
Comprehensive Deaf Center

Dear Chair Mizuno and members of the Committee on Human Services,

My name is Judy Coryell and I am the parent of two deaf daughters as well as the director of the Gallaudet Regional Center at Kapi'olani Community College. I have been personally involved with developing a deaf center as a parent, member of Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland's Deaf and Blind Task Force, member of the Vocational Rehabilitation's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board and member of the community. I am currently developing plans for the Center with a Leadership Team composed of deaf and hearing members of the Deaf Community.

Description of the Center. The Comprehensive Deaf Center (CDC) is a Hawai'i community center that is being developed to promote individual growth, social awareness, productivity and equality, by empowering deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind persons to be full participants in the Hawai'i community at large. Hawai'i's only Comprehensive Deaf Center will provide programs and services to deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals *to maximize their ability to lead productive and fulfilling lives—personally, vocationally, academically, financially, and socially*. It is designed as a one-stop service center for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals, their families/friends, and the professionals who work with them. The Center will house vocational specialists, counselors, adjustment specialists, and educational specialists, and audiologists.

“The mission of the Comprehensive Deaf Center is to provide a social gathering place for members of the Deaf Community and their families to expand access to knowledge and communication through support, empowerment, education and enhancement of self-sufficiency.” A staff of 5 full-time professionals will offer support for a diverse group of people including (for example):

- vocational counseling and training for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind adults for independence and self-sufficiency;
- adjustment services for youth and adults who have recently lost their hearing or are becoming dually sensory impaired (deaf and blind);
- workshops on effective communication strategies and information about assistive devices for senior citizens who are losing their hearing;

- programs and services for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind children and their families in need of information and resources for maximizing the abilities of their children.

For deaf people, the Center will provide selected job training programs including a unique Micro-enterprise Development program that will include job training in areas such as auto detailing, cleaning services, food preparation, and technology repair (including assistive technology used by deaf and hard of hearing individuals). This program will also provide technical assistance and business service support for individuals who are interested in starting deaf-, hard of hearing-, or deaf-blind-owned and operated micro-enterprise businesses.

The Center will also provide programs for enhancing independent living skills (including cooking and meal planning, money management, and job readiness skills), classes to improve English and communication skills (reading, writing, speech reading), and American Sign Language classes for new signers, families of deaf children, and community members. It may also house related programs such as an interpreting lab for KCC sign language interpreting students and community interpreters as well as extension offices for the Kapi'olani Deaf Center and the Gallaudet University Regional Center of the Pacific.

Finally, it will serve as a social and cultural gathering place for Deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals for continuing education programs and community events.

Need for the Center. This Center has been the dream of the Deaf Community since 1972 and the need been documented and recommended in county- and state-funded studies published in 1976, 2001, and 2009. In response to the 2009 Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) report, the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division has recently funded a planning effort through Kapi'olani Community College/Kapi'olani Deaf Center to design and propose a Comprehensive Deaf Center. Establishing a Deaf Adjustment Center is one of the top priorities identified by Vocational Rehabilitation in their State Plan. This request for legislative support and funding is a component of the planning process.

A Comprehensive Deaf Center will invite participation from the various diverse populations in Hawai'i who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind including approximately 375 deaf, hard, of hearing, and deaf-blind school-aged children and 80,000 deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind adults.

The Center addresses serious employment, educational, and personal challenges facing this diverse special population. Deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind adults, especially those who have been deaf since childhood, are historically underemployed and rarely advance or are unemployed and are receiving Social Security Supplemental Income and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSI/SSDI:

federal financial assistance program for aged and people with disabilities). Families with deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind children are in dire need of information and resources for raising special needs children. Only 5% of parents of ASL-using deaf and deaf-blind children are able to effectively communicate with their children in an understandable language.

Personal, educational, and vocational needs vary for the different populations. The Center's programs and services will be designed to address those distinct needs and interests including information, resources, independent living and self-advocacy skills, instruction in English and ASL, vocational training, placement, and coaching, communication strategies including use of assistive technology, and other related vocational and personal supports. In addition, as described in the LRB report, "disconnected and uncoordinated service delivery minimizes the effectiveness of already limited resources... for the full range of needed resources, programs and services". In order to receive various needed services, deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind consumers still have to travel to multiple locations and interact with multiple providers to receive the range of services needed. This is the basis for centralizing services in a one-stop service center.

Benefits of the Center. The benefits of a Comprehensive Deaf Center to deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals are numerous. The Center concept:

- offers an option for a cost-effective, convenient, centralized, and efficient delivery of a wide range of essential programs and service in one space;
- creates the ability for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals to become self-sustaining, tax-paying citizens who are prepared for and hold jobs that provide them with an income and are meaningful and rewarding;
- enhances communication and literacy skills of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals and their families;
- provides opportunities for self-employment through a micro-enterprise development program.

The ultimate benefit will be improved quality of life for deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind individuals in the work place, at home, and in the community.

To enable people who are deaf to have a positive and fully accessible environment to obtain necessary services from agencies who sign and are familiar with deaf people and deaf culture, I am committed to developing that in a Comprehensive Deaf Center in Hawaii. The Center will allow deaf people to be as independent as possible by providing an environment where a number of services and social activities can be provided. Please allow this Center to become a reality by appropriating start up funds to begin operations and establishment of services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith Corryell

My Testimony

Aloha! I'm Christine Holmes and I'm Deaf. I'm an American Sign Language Instructor at Kapi'olani Community College. I've been aware of a group working on a dream to have a place called the Deaf Center, the home of our Hawaii's Deaf community including other islands. In order to have a dream that come true, we are asking legislature to please help and support us. We need a place for our Deaf people and hearing people, Deaf organizations, Deaf clubs, and more. This is our primary need for our Deaf community. We need everyone come together as ohana and to build great relationships with one another. We need you to please understand our need and support us as well.

Thank you for listening.

Christine Holmes

Susan Kroe-Unabia
7086 Hawaii Kai Drive
Honolulu, HI 96825

susankroe@aol.com

Letter of Support

Comprehensive Deaf Center--House Bill (HB514) and Senate Bill (SB127)

I STRONGLY support the creation of the Comprehensive Deaf Center. Please allot money to help create a central place for deaf people to be serviced by an array of agencies. Deaf people have unique needs and people who are well versed in sign language are best to serve them. The creation of the Center would be a hub with coordinated agencies to serve the deaf.

MAHALO

Susan Kroe-Unabia

Representative John Mizuno, Chair
Committee on Human Services
Hawaii State Capitol
415 Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 3, 2011

Re: Support for HB 514 Making a Grant for the Establishment of a Comprehensive Deaf Center

Dear Chair Mizuno and members of the Committee on Human Services,

My name is Cheryl Mizusawa and I am a private citizen and no longer employed at the Hawaii Centers for Independent Living. I am personally involved with helping consumer's needs, member of Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland's Deaf and Blind Task Force.

My point of view that many deaf people from 16 years old to over 80 years old felt very comfortable with deaf staff. It will be a great benefit if Comprehensive Deaf Center to be establish. I guaranteed that Deaf people will be very thrilling to have many wonderful opportunity to attend the workshop like skill of the Independent Living, empowerment, employment training, and many other things they really want to learn if Comprehensive Deaf Center open to the deaf community. In my time way back to 1970s there was always struggled to get job, where to go because most non-profit organizations do not experience with the deaf consumers. I always turned around and sit and think all the disabilities with hearing people are very fortunate to receive the services. I couldn't get other service but only depend on the Vocational Rehabilitation (Deaf Services) that always provide me with employment training, job placement. I couldn't rejected some my deaf friends who need my help because they couldn't trust hearing people because hearing people always briefly the summarize. Last year, I was laid off from Hawaii Centers for Independent Living due to the financial. They put limit to provide the interpreters. Most former consumers called me and ask for my help.

To enable people who are deaf to have a safe environment to socialize, obtain necessary services from agencies who sign and are familiar with deaf people and deaf culture, I am committed to developing that in a Comprehensive Deaf Center in Hawaii. The Center will allow deaf people to be as independent as possible by providing an environment where a number of services and social activities can be provided. Please allow this center to become a reality by appropriating start up funds to begin operations and establishment of services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Mizusawa

From: Tuesday, February 01, 2011 10:41 PM
Sent: HUS testimony
To: tomalisa1@gmail.com
Cc: Testimony for HB514 on 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM
Subject:

Testimony for HUS 2/3/2011 9:00:00 AM HB514

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: LisaAnn Tom
Organization: Individual
Address: Honolulu, HI
Phone: 808-373-8312
E-mail: tomalisa1@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/1/2011

Comments:

Dear Chair Mizuno and members of the Committee on Human Services,

My name is Lisa Tom and I am personally involved am personally involved with developing a deaf center as a deaf advocate, member of Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland's Deaf and Blind Task Force, and member of the community.

I'm in favor of this bill because it is a long life dream for deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind community to have this unique CDC as a one-stop center. It is really a long overdue and we keep our hopes. The funding would help us greatly to start setting up the CDC and expand better services for the community in the State of Hawaii. A CDC is an ideal for the community where we have the access to receive full information by using direct communication and enhance our self-esteem by learning new skills such as better interview skills. In additional, we hope to have great partnership with other agencies/organizations.

To enable people who are deaf to have a safe environment to socialize, obtain necessary services from agencies who sign and are familiar with deaf people and deaf culture, I am committed to developing that in a Comprehensive Deaf Center in Hawaii. The Center will allow deaf people to be as independent as possible by providing an environment where a number of services and social activities can be provided. Please allow this center to become a reality by appropriating start up funds to begin operations and establishment of services.

Thank you for your consideration in favoring this bill.

Sincerely,
LisaAnn Tom
CDC Planning committee