
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The Hawaiian language, the native language of
2 the Native Hawaiian people, was once a thriving language used by
3 Native Hawaiians and foreigners alike. However, by the late
4 twentieth century, the Hawaiian language was pushed to the brink
5 of extinction due to a number of factors, including an 1896 law
6 that functioned to ban the speaking of the Hawaiian language in
7 Hawaii schools.

8 Fortunately, the Hawaiian language was saved by several
9 historic initiatives, including the department of education's
10 Hawaiian language immersion program, which was launched in the
11 1980s. Today, the Hawaiian language immersion program is
12 offered at twenty-one public schools and educates more than tow
13 thousand students in kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

14 The assessment requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act
15 of 2001 present a major problem for the Hawaiian language
16 immersion program. As English is not formally introduced in
17 Hawaiian language immersion program classrooms until the fifth
18 grade, third and fourth grade students take assessments in the



1 Hawaiian language to comply with the requirements of the No
2 Child Left Behind Act. Since the 2005-2006 school year, these
3 students took the Hawaiian aligned portfolio assessment, which
4 was developed in the Hawaiian language specifically for the
5 Hawaiian language immersion program. However, the department of
6 education has decided to stop using the Hawaiian aligned
7 portfolio assessment and is instead administering a Hawaiian
8 translation of the Hawaii state assessment this school year.

9 A number of problems arise when a test is translated from
10 one language to another. One problem is that, in many cases,
11 the construct of the test will have changed because of the
12 translation. For example, an English reading test, once
13 translated into Hawaiian, does not necessarily measure reading
14 proficiency in either English or Hawaiian. These translation
15 problems can be mitigated through the development of a parallel
16 test written originally in the Hawaiian language.

17 The legislature finds that the Hawaiian language is a
18 critical component of the heritage of the State of Hawaii, and
19 the State has a solemn obligation to perpetuate the Hawaiian
20 language. For example, the Hawaii constitution recognizes the
21 Hawaiian language as one of the two official languages of the
22 State. Moreover, the board of education has adopted a policy



1 (Board of Education Policy 2105) acknowledging that its Hawaiian
2 language immersion program is "an essential component to the
3 revitalization and continuation of the Hawaiian language and
4 culture."

5 Furthermore, the federal Native American Languages Act of
6 1990 recognizes the United States' responsibility to ensure the
7 survival of Native American languages and establishes the
8 nation's policy of encouraging and supporting the use of Native
9 American languages as a medium of instruction to help preserve
10 those languages.

11 In light of this, the legislature further finds that to
12 uphold its obligation to perpetuate the Hawaiian language, the
13 department of education must provide the students of the
14 Hawaiian language immersion program with an assessment system
15 that most accurately measures their academic achievement.

16 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
17 education to develop reading, math, and science assessments in
18 the Hawaiian language for grades three and four Hawaiian
19 language immersion program students.

20 SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by
21 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read
22 as follows:



1 "CHAPTER

2 HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

3 § -1 **Assessments.** (a) The reading, math, science, and
4 other assessments administered to students in grades three and
5 four of the department of education's Hawaiian language
6 immersion program shall be developed originally in the Hawaiian
7 language and include accommodations regularly provided to these
8 students in their classrooms.

9 (b) The assessments shall not be Hawaiian translations of
10 the general state assessments and shall be:

- 11 (1) Aligned with the vision, mission, and programmatic
12 goals of the Hawaiian language immersion program;
- 13 (2) Aligned with state academic content and achievement
14 standards;
- 15 (3) Valid, reliable, and consistent with relevant,
16 nationally recognized professional and technical
17 standards; and
- 18 (4) Compliant with federal requirements.

19 (c) All ancillary assessment materials and tools that are
20 made available to students taking the general state assessment
21 shall also be made available in the Hawaiian language to
22 students in the Hawaiian language immersion program.



1 (d) The board of education shall adopt rules establishing
 2 procedures for the development of these assessments, including
 3 the requirement that the Hawaiian language community, including
 4 the department's Hawaiian education program section, the Aha
 5 Kauleo Kaiapuni Hawaii, members of Hawaiian language immersion
 6 program schools and the Hawaiian language programs at the
 7 University of Hawaii at Hilo and the University of Hawaii at
 8 Manoa, be consulted and collaborated with in good faith
 9 throughout the drafting and review of the assessments."

10 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

11

INTRODUCED BY: Calvin K. King
 BY REQUEST

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Report Title:

Hawaiian Language Immersion Program; Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Package

Description:

Requires the DOE to develop reading, math, and science
assessment tests in the Hawaiian language for grades 3 and 4
students in the Hawaiian language immersion program.

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