



HR129/HCR167

**REQUESTING A REVIEW OF THE STATE'S FUNDING FOR EXISTING ESL PROGRAMS AND
HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAMS OFFERED IN HAWAII AND ANY DISPARITIES IN
FUNDING FOR THE STATE'S TWO OFFICIAL LANGUAGES.**

House Committee on Education

April 2, 2012

2:00 p.m.

Room 309

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) appreciates the intent of HR129/HCR167, which requests the University of Hawai'i to review the state's funding for existing English as a Second Language (ESL) programs offered in Hawai'i and any disparities in funding for the state's two official languages.

OHA has long advocated for increased funding for the state's Hawaiian Language Immersion Program (HLIP) and other Hawaiian language programs. However, we want to ensure that, if HLIP receives funding reserved specifically for ESL programs, the Hawaiian language's special legal status as both an indigenous language and an official language of the state is recognized and reaffirmed. Unlike ESL, HLIP is intended to perpetuate and preserve a non-English language—the native language of our ancestors, which was on the verge of extinction 20 years ago. We ask that the University of Hawaii carefully consider this important factor when writing the report requested by this resolution.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.