



HB223
RELATING TO MAHINA 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I

House Committee on Ocean, Marine Resources & Hawaiian Affairs

January 30, 2013

10:00 a.m.

Room: 325

Eia au kekahi 'elele o ke Ke'ena Kuleana Hawai'i (OHA) ke **PAIPAI** nei i ka HB223, kekahi pila i loko o ka pū'olo kau 'aha 'ōlelo 2013 o OHA. Na ke kaiāulu 'ōlelo Hawai'i i mālama i ka mahina 'o Pepeluali i Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i a na lākou i paipai i ke kia'āina e ho'onoho a e kuahaua 'o ka mahina 'o Pepeluali 'o ia ka Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ma ka makahiki 1994 a ma ka 1995.

'Oiai ua 'ōlelo 'ia ka 'ōlelo makuahine e nā 'ōiwi me nā malihini like 'ole ua 'ane halapohe 'o ia ma ka hiki 'ana i ka makahiki 1980 a ua koe paha ma kahi o kanalima mau mānaleo ma lalo o ka piha makahiki he 18. 'O ke kumu o kēia emi o ka 'ōlelo 'o ia ke kāmāwai 1896 nāna i ho'opāpā i ka'ōlelo 'ōiwi o ka 'āina ma na kula aupuni.

Akā nō na'e, ma muli o ka hana huliamaahi hō'ala kāmāka i o ka papahana Pūnana Leo o ka 'Aha Pūnana Leo, ka papahana kula kaiapuni o ke Ke'ena Ho'ona'auao a me nā papa 'ōlelo Hawai'i ma nā kula nui ua holomua nui ka ho'ōla 'ana o ka 'ōlelo. Eia kekahi, ma ka makahiki 1978 ua ho'opāku'i 'ia ka ke Kumukāmāwai 'o Hawai'i a 'ike 'o ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i kekahi o nā 'ōlelo kūhelu o ka Moku'āina.

'Oiai ua holo pono ka 'aukahi 'ōlelo Hawai'i ua pono nō ka nui o nā kāmāka e 'ōlelo aku, 'ōlelo mai i ua 'ōlelo hiwahiwa. Inā e ho'onoho ana ka mahina 'o Pepeluali 'o ia ka Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i a laila e ho'onui ana a e hō'ike ana i ke ko'iko'i o ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i no Hawai'i nei.

No laila, eia kekahi 'elele o ke Ke'ena Kuleana Hawai'i e koi ha'aha'a nei iā 'oukou e nā po'e hanohano o ke kōmike e 'ae, e kāko'o a e **HO'OHOLE** i kēia HB223. Mahalo i kēia manawa e ha'i 'ōlelo ma kēia mea i aloha nui 'ia e mākou Hawai'i.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) strongly **SUPPORTS** HB223, which is a bill in OHA's 2013 Legislative Package. The Hawaiian language community has long

considered February “Hawaiian Language Month” and successfully advocated for gubernatorial proclamations designating February 1994 and February 1995 as Hawaiian Language Month. This bill would codify this ceremonial designation in statute, making every February ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month.

While once spoken throughout Hawai‘i by Native Hawaiians and foreigners alike, ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was considered to be nearly extinct by the 1980s, when fewer than 50 fluent speakers under the age of 18 were left. A major reason for the deterioration of the Hawaiian language was an 1896 law that required English instruction in Hawai‘i schools, which essentially banned Hawaiian students from speaking their native tongue.

However, great strides have been made to bring about a renaissance of the Hawaiian language through programs such as ‘Aha Pūnana Leo’s Hawaiian language immersion schools, the Department of Education’s Hawaiian language immersion program and the Hawaiian language programs of the University of Hawai‘i system. Also, in 1978, the Hawai‘i Constitution was amended to recognize the Hawaiian language as one of the two official languages of the State.

Although there is much momentum in the revitalization of the Hawaiian language, for ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i to thrive rather than simply survive, more people need to speak the language. The designation of February as “‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month” will perpetuate the use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and emphasize the importance of the Hawaiian Language in Hawai‘i’s society today.

Therefore, OHA urges the committee to **PASS** HB223. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs

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Testimony of President Soulee Stroud

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OCEAN, MARINE RESOURCES
AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

HOUSE BILL 223

RELATING TO MAHINA OLELO HAWAII

Wednesday; January 30, 2013; 10:00 am; Room 325

Aloha Madam Chair Hanohano, Vice chair Cullen and members of the committee. I am Soulee Stroud, president of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs here speaking in support of House Bill 223, Mahina Olelo Hawaii that designates the month of February as “Olelo Hawaii Month.”

Hawaiian Civic Clubs have respected and appreciated students, teachers, authors, researchers and other who have labored to bring back the Hawaiian language. Olelo Hawaii Month will be yet another tool to honor and promote the language.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
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