

LATE TESTIMONY

House Bill NO. 624
COMPREHENSIVE DEAF CENTER

Tuesday, February 5th, 2013

Aloha, my name is Colleen Cidade Matusof, I am a Deaf mother, Independent Living Specialist at Signs of Self, Educator, Leader as Advocate, and Read Aloud to Deaf Keiki. I testify in support 100% of House Bill No. 637 –COMPREHENSIVE DEAF CENTER for our people - Senior Citizens, youth kids, college students, families, workers, who need second home, our language, our socialize, our one center and our one communicate access.

- Youth kids – Sports, counseling, peers
- Senior citizens – socialize, activities
- College students – tutoring, mentors, performance
- Family member – literacy, tutoring, counseling, peers,
- Workers – learn ASL, advocate, independent living
- One language – ASL communication access
- One socialize – community center as second home
- One culture – cherished histories
- One unite - Empowerment

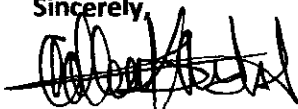
I work with deaf, hard of hearing and blind/deaf clients at Signs of Self. Clients are very enthusiastic and want to learn more, asking me where are others like themselves, they need help and want to be their independent living. Some of them don't have any tech, come to my office from their homes (West side and East side) by their get bus. They want to learn to socialize, educate, know about their rights, learn how to be strong leaders and advocates. I want to see them grow their self-esteem high. I want to see them be successful and see them smile again.

Some clients are not getting their VR because they are waiting on their lists. They depend on SSI or SSDI, stay home, sometimes get in trouble, have low self-esteem, and become dependent. Remember they have dreams too, and they have goals, but without support it's so difficult. Are they worthless or do they have worth as people?

Again, I firmly urge you to supporting the HOUSE BILL 624 to establish the Comprehensive Service Center for our future so we can all use their services more!

Thank you very much for support of this important bill on behalf of the Deaf Community.

Sincerely,



Colleen Cidade Matusof
1308 Farrington Street
Honolulu, HI 96826

LATE TESTIMONY

REPRESENTATIVE MELE CARROLL, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE BERT KOBAYASHI, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

HOUSE BILL NO. 624, MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
AND OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE DEAF CENTER

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013 AT 9:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329

Hello, my name is Darlene Cho and Deaf. I support the Comprehensive Service Center.

However, I am concerned about the interpreter referral service that will stop on June 30, 2013. I need ASL interpreters to communicate with my children's school. My kids are Hearing. I want the interpreter referral service to continue so I can communicate with my children's teachers.

If there is no interpreter referral service like Hawaii Interpreting Service, then what do I do? How will I get an interpreter? How will the school know how to get a qualified interpreter for our communication?

Not only do I need an interpreter to communicate with my children's teachers, I need interpreters for my kids' doctor or emergency situations at the hospital.

Please support the Comprehensive Service Center AND the Interpreter Referral Service. House Bill 624 is similar to House Bill 637 so I prefer House Bill 637 and recommend that the appropriated moneys from HB 624 be placed into HB 637.

Thank you.

Darlene Cho
Honolulu, HI

HB ~~621~~ 624

LATE TESTIMONY

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Severo Cargo and my friend's name is Roselyn Engleman. We both are deaf non-VR clients. We both are senior citizens. We went to Hawaii School for Deaf & Blind. (formerly the Diamond Head School for Deaf & Blind).

Before the Vocational Rehabilitation helped us get the jobs. Now we are retired.

We strongly support HB 624, Making a Grant to Establish and Operate a Comprehensive Deaf Center, because we feel it's very important for deaf people to get the services what they need.

Also, pls help keep interpreting services & independent living skills for deaf - very important for us. We need interpreters to go to classes, too.

Thank you for supporting the bill.

Roselyn Engleman
Severo Cargo

LATE TESTIMONY

HOUSE BILL NO. 624

**MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION
OF A COMPREHENSIVE DEAF CENTER**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013 AT 9:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329**

Aloha, my name is Scott O'Neal and I am director of an agency called Signs of Self.

I am writing in support of House Bill No. 624 because I firmly believe in the goals and intent of this bill. Hawaii's deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind people have long been overlooked when it comes to a comprehensive plan to provide services and ensure they have the same rights as every other community group. The mistake most people make is that people with a hearing loss are just like everyone else and can access the same services that have already been established for other people with "disabilities".

But, this often is not true.

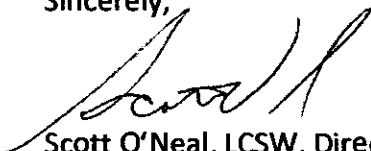
Because of the unique language, cultural, and developmental aspects of growing up with a hearing loss, many organizations and service providers that serve other people are at best not prepared for the needs of individuals with a hearing loss. And at worst, do harm by providing inadequate or inappropriate services.

The establishment of a center specializing in the needs of this community will serve not only a "few deaf individuals", but the entire community. Where there may be a minority of people who are born completely deaf, there is a huge group of people who lose their hearing over the course of their lifetime – by age, disease, or being involved in military action. All of these people would be served by such a center as this. And education and services would also be provided by the many agencies and organizations providing for the care of these individuals.

Again, I firmly urge you to support the House Bill No. 624 to establish the Comprehensive Deaf Center to improve the lives and experience of all of Hawaii's people.

Thank you very much for your support of this important bill on behalf of the Deaf community and those of us who work with and support them.

Sincerely,



Scott O'Neal, LCSW, Director

Signs of Self

1481 S. King Street, #541, Honolulu, HI 96814

(808) 382-3881

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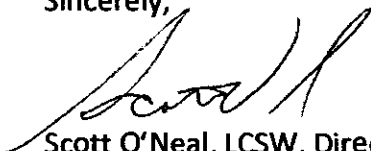
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