

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 5, 2013

MEMORANDUM:

TO: The Honorable Mele Carroll, Chair
House Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair
House Committee on Health

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 637 – MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND
OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 5, 2013; 11:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services as a grant for the establishment and operation of a Comprehensive Service Center for deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind individuals in Hawaii.

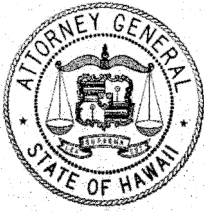
DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) formerly known as the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services to the Blind Division of the Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of H.B. 624. We ask that if this bill is passed that it does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Biennium Budget.

The DVR has worked closely with the deaf community throughout the years to establish a Comprehensive Service Center (CSC) for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-

Blind and is committed to assist in the funding of vocational rehabilitation activities within the center.

The DVR does not have sufficient funds to support non-vocational rehabilitation related activities under the proposed center. The DVR is unable to support any further funding beyond the Governor's proposed budget if such additional funding will affect current priorities within the Governor's proposed budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony to this Committee.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE, 2013**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 637, RELATING TO MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE DEAF CENTER .

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND ON HUMAN SERVICES

DATE: Tuesday, February 5, 2013 **TIME:** 11:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 329

TESTIFIER(S): David M. Louie, Attorney General, or
Candace J. Park

Chairs Belatti and Carroll and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments on this bill, the purpose of which is to provide grants for the establishment and operation of a comprehensive service center for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind community.

Sections 2 and 3 of this bill propose that grants be made pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), for the establishment and operation of a comprehensive service center, but do not specify the intended recipients of the grants. This poses a potential constitutional problem.

Article VII, section 4, of the State Constitution provides in part: "No grant of public money or property shall be made except pursuant to standards provided by law." Chapter 42F, HRS, provides the standards for grants made by the Legislature; "grant" is defined in section 42F-101 as "an award of state funds by the legislature, by an appropriation to a specified recipient, to support the activities of the recipient and permit the community to benefit from those activities."

In order to avoid the potential constitutional concern, we respectfully request that the Committee amend the bill by specifying the intended recipients of the grants.

**REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE DEE MORIKAWA, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
REPRESENTATIVE MELE CARROLL, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE BERTRAND KOBAYASHI, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 637, MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
AND OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013 AT 11:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329**

Aloha, I am Francine Mae Aona Kenyon and am representing the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board (DHAHB) as the chair of Comprehensive Deaf Center (CDC)/Comprehensive Service Center (CSC) Ad Hoc Committee and Legislative Committee.

DHHAB was established in 1980 by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and is comprised of nine (9) deaf and hard of hearing members including four (4) from the neighboring islands who are either current/former VR consumers or doing the business for the Deaf community; parent of deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind child; two (2) special education teachers; and non-voting Vocational Rehabilitation staff and administrator. The purpose of the DHHAB is to oversee the effectiveness and efficiency of the services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

On behalf of DHHAB, we strongly testify in support with intent of House Bill No. 637, Making a Grant for the Establishment and Operation of a Comprehensive Service Center because of our top priorities as follows: 1) communication access; 2) information and referral service/outreach and 3) development of a centralized, coordinated and comprehensive center for improved access to services.

Based on four (4) studies, our mission is to provide a centralized, coordinated, and comprehensive service center to enable people who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind and their families to expand access to knowledge and communication through support, empowerment, education and enhancement of self-sufficiency.

Therefore, we seek for the additional funds from the state that would provide services at the CSC for non-DVR consumers or for non-employment related services for DVR consumers. The target population for the CSC are about 10% of 260,000 people who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind, according to the 2012 Disability Statistics Compendium in the State of Hawaii.

In addition to supporting the CSC, please appropriate monies for an Interpreter Referral Service which is losing funding from VR as of July 1, 2013.

Again, we firmly urge you to passing the House Bill No. 637 with amendments, Making a Grant to Establish and Operate a Comprehensive Service Center.

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

Sincerely,



Francine Mae Aona Kenyon
Chair of CDC/CSC & Legislative Committee
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Advisory Board
archerygal001@gmail.com
2520 Jasmine Street
Honolulu, HI 96816



Lisa Ann Tom
Chair
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Advisory Board
lisa2tom@gmail.com

morikawa2 - Shaun

From: Edward Thompson, III on behalf of HUS testimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 8:25 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: FW: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 8:26 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: dianeblastic@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diane Blastic	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am support of this bill. As a part of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Interpreting community, I see first hand where services are needed. Individuals who are Deaf and use American Sign Language are in need of a service center where the language u sed is American Sign Language. Having individuals go to a center where their language is not used is prohibitive to their ability to communicate. Also, an interpreting referral service is key for State and Local agencies. Often, Deaf and Hearing people need an interpreter to communicate. Without an agency, the means to get an interpreter becomes more difficult. Most Hearing individuals do not know how to procure interpreting services. Please consider funding both a service center run for and BY members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and continuing to provide referral services so that Deaf and HoH people can continue to be active member of the Hawai'i community. Thank you.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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

**REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE DEE MORIKAWA, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 637, MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
AND OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013 AT 11:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329**

My name is Deborah T. Makahanaloa and am deaf. I work as contracting clerk at Fort Shafter Army Base for over 20 years. Whenever we have staff meeting, Hawaii Interpreting Services (HIS) always provides me ASL interpreters.

I strongly testify in support with intent of House Bill 637, Making a Grant for the Establishment and Operation of a Comprehensive Service Center because of my essential need for effective, efficient communication access between deaf employees and hearing co-workers.

However, I heard that HIS contract with VR will expire June 30, 2013 and there will be no funds beginning July 1, 2013. If there is no interpreter referral services, then it will be a great struggle for me to get the communication access that I need in order to participate at meetings, workshops or trainings offered by Fort Shafter.

Please allocate monies for Interpreter Referral Services in the CSC bill.

Again, I firmly urge you to passing the House Bill No. 637 to have the Comprehensive Service Center be established and operated to serve the entire Deaf community in the state.

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

Sincerely,

Deborah T. Makahanaloa
Deaf Consumer
3151 Castel Street, Apt. 201
Honolulu, HI 96815
poohbabe53@gmail.com

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

HOUSE BILL NO. 637, MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
AND OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013 AT 11:00 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.

Thank you.

Darlene Cho
Honolulu, HI

TESTIMONY OF
RODERICK J. MACDONALD

SUBMITTED TO
THE HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE JOINT COMMITTEES ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HEALTH
REP. Mele Carroll, CHAIR

RELATING TO HB 637
"A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION
OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER"

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013
11:00 AM, CONFERENCE ROOM 329
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL

Mr. Chairman, my name is Roderick Macdonald. I am originally from New England but have lived here in Hawaii for the past 14 years.

I have been blind since I was three years old, and have been profoundly deaf for most of my life. These are significant obstacles to getting ahead in life, but I have been very fortunate to have had a good education, good training and good support that enabled me to achieve most of my goals in life.

I am retired now, but for 30-odd years I worked as a Computer Specialist, Management Analyst, Policy Analyst, Rehabilitation Teacher for the Blind, and instructor at the Community College and University levels. I could never have done that without being taught to read without sight, listen without hearing and use a computer without either sight or hearing. I've been there, done that, and it would never have come to pass without the skills I learned along the way.

This brings me to the here-and-now: I am here to support, as strongly as I am able, the adoption of House Bill 637 for the establishment of a Comprehensive Service Center for Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Deaf-Blind people. I do not represent any agency or organization; I represent only me, myself and I. However, I am a consumer who has had the opportunity to benefit from the types of services this Center will be providing, and I cannot stress too strongly how important these training opportunities have been to me in the past.

Hawaii is a very special place. I use the word "special" as both a superlative and as a challenge, but I would like to focus on the challenging aspect of being a person with a disability in Hawaii.

When I taught my first class here in Hawaii, I had eight students from eight ethnic backgrounds; everyone was a minority of one. Each of these eight students came from a unique cultural background that influenced the individual's approach to learning, about disability and, most of all, about being a person.

I'd like to tell you about one of these students. She was 68 years old, very intelligent and with two advanced degrees from a Mainland university. She lost her eyesight as an adult, and whenever she visited her mother, the family expected her to enter the house through the back door, because they were embarrassed to have people seeing a blind person using a cane enter their front door.

Another of my students had been a school principal on one of the Pacific islands who also lost his vision as an adult. He was very quiet during class and always said "yes" if I asked him if he understood the lesson. But I could tell he wasn't getting it, so we had a chat. He explained to me that he had been brought up to be quiet, respectful and never question authority. I in turn explained to him that I need him to participate in the learning experience by asking questions when he needed answers. We came to an agreement and when this man went home, one of the first things he did was to

send me an email on his very new computer to thank me for helping him acquire the skills that enabled him to use a computer.

Yet another of my students told me that her upbringing taught her that a disability was punishment for sins committed in a past life. Another told me that it had been a major decision just to come to the agency seeking help, because her tradition held that it was the family that was responsible for "problems", not public agencies.

The challenges I have mentioned were encountered when I worked as a Rehabilitation Teacher for the Blind at Ho'opono, Hawaii's specialized training facility for the blind. Blindness is Ho'opono's specialty, but they have neither the understanding nor the expertise to deal with hearing loss. Yet the "other" sensory loss affects more people and can be every bit as much of an obstacle to participation and achievement. It was once observed that with blindness, one tends to miss things; but with deafness one tends to miss people.

Many people do not understand that hearing loss is often an "invisible" barrier. If you pass a deaf person on the street and say, "Good morning!", and the other person does not reply, you might well feel the person was rude in not returning your greetings. But the other person is deaf, did not hear your greeting, and very possibly may not have the ability to speak orally. I was once standing on a street corner preparing to cross when a man came up beside me and asked me a question. I did not even know he had asked me a question - I just continued watching the traffic. He became angry and hit me on the shoulder. When I turned to him he started pointing down the street, obviously asking something. I told him I was deaf and could not understand him, and then crossed the street.

Many people "assume" that deaf people can read lips. Some can, but most deaf people find lip reading difficult, at best. For most deaf people communication is via American Sign Language, a unique language separate from English that does not have a written form, so even communicating via written notes can be confusing at times. And because English for most deaf people is a second language they have never heard, simple tasks like reading the instructions printed in English may not be quite so simple.

In many situations when a deaf person must interact with hearing individuals - situations that of necessity happen every day - the assistance of a sign language interpreter is needed. One might think that having a third party facilitate the communication between two languages is a great solution, and most of the time it is: The hearing person can speak as usual and the deaf person can "listen" as usual while following American Sign Language, and when it is the deaf person's turn to say something he or she can use ASL, the interpreter repeats the communication in spoken English, and we are all on the same page.

Unfortunately it doesn't always work as planned. While I was working at Ho'opono we had a case meeting to discuss braille

instruction for a young deaf woman who was losing her vision. The young woman sat on one side of a long table while her interpreter sat opposite. Everything was fine until one of the staff, sitting beside the deaf woman, became annoyed that she was not looking at him - she kept watching her interpreter. He finally reached out and shook her by the shoulder, saying "Look at me when I am talking to you!" This was a well-trained professional; he knew quite a bit about vision loss, including the specific eye condition the young woman had, but he did not understand deafness. After that meeting the young woman decided she did not want braille instruction, yet that instruction would have been very useful to her as her progressive vision loss impaired her ability to read printed materials.

So how are deaf people to acquire the skills to work, learn and prosper? How are deaf people to learn to overcome stereotypes and prejudices that prevail in a hearing society? How do deaf people learn to write an effective resume in a language that is not their own? How do deaf people learn to feel positive about themselves, and how do deaf people help their family members overcome that embarrassment and even shame?

Ladies and Gentlemen, I suggest that you have the answer in front of you with the proposal to establish a Comprehensive Deaf Center to address these issues. Please accept my very strong support of this bill.

morikawa2 - Shaun

From: Edward Thompson, III on behalf of HUS testimony
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 6:02 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: FW: HB637, 2.5.13 at 11 am in room 329

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

-----Original Message-----

From: wkekua@gmail.com [[mail to: wkekua@gmail.com](mailto:wkekua@gmail.com)]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 5:48 PM
To: HUS testimony
Subject: HB637, 2.5.13 at 11 am in room 329

Dear Chairs Carroll and Belatti, and committee members,

My name is Billy Kekua and currently serving as the president for Aloha State Association of the Deaf (ASAD). We have worked hard to ensure that our goal to establish a center for the Deaf since 1972. It has been a long time for us to push for it to happen and I ask of you members to help us to complete our goal.

More and more of our beloved Deaf members are becoming the important part of the community as senior citizens. We need a center that provides the service for our older Deaf people. They eventually will need our help to ensure that they live in a comfortable environment where the language is available.

Also we have many young members who needs our wisdom, leadership, and guidance thus the need of a continuing education program. We can provide the service for them to improve their literacy skills, independent living skills, occupational skills, and many more.

Our language is the number one priority for our daily needs. I believe that the center should be open and transparent where Deaf people can feel safe and comfortable to use the services through American Sign Language. I cannot stress enough how important for this to happen since we worked hard for 41 years.

In addition to supporting the CSC, please appropriate monies for an Interpreter Referral Service which is losing funding from VR as of July 1, 2013.

ASAD and I respectfully urge you committee members to help us and set up the center together. I would like to give you my appreciation for your hard work for us.

Malama pono,
Billy Kekua
ASAD President

morikawa2 - Shaun

From: Edward Thompson, III on behalf of HUS testimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 8:21 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: FW: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 4:38 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: edchevy59@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

Submitted on: 2/5/2013
Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ed Chevy	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Deaf services are much needed for 25,000 deaf and hard of hearing in this island. We need to restore deaf services contract funding. The loss of 2 critical contracts that support interpreter referral services and independent living vocational rehab services will be a serious blow for many of us who need the future. No interpreter referral rehab services mean disorganized chaos and the deaf and hard of hearing community will suffer the consequences.

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Aloha Representative Belatti, Chair of House Committee on Health, Representative Mela Carrol, Chair of Human Services, and committee members of Health and Human Services:

Hello my name is Eileen Chiwa. I am a retired federal worker. I've worked for the federal government for 29 ½ years, and during my employment with the federal government, I went to various workshops and training and at these required activities, I have always depended on interpreters. I've been retired now for almost 3 years, and I am concerned at hearing that DVR funds for interpreter referral services and independent living services may not be available after June 30th of this year. I feel that these funds are extremely important for these services as well as the Comprehensive Services Center.

I have often depended on professional interpreter services to assist with communication when I go to a doctors' appointment. I would like to share my experience of having surgery. I thought that I didn't need an interpreter and I would try to read my doctor's lips. However, on learning what would happen on surgery day I panicked when the surgeon told me that he would wear a mask. I insisted on having an interpreter and was so happy they were able to contact the interpreter referral services and hired an interpreter. This interpreter also interpreted the appointment with the admissions department while filling out the most extensive forms. Thank goodness for this service.

I am feeling a bit anxious wondering whether the Social Security Office will be able to contact the interpreter referral service for my future Social Security appointment because I am now 58 years old and will be applying for social security benefits in four years. Can you imagine going to a Social Security appointment and not understanding the language/communication. I ask you all to please support HB637 as this will provide for the very important bridge to communication for deaf and hearing people.

Thank you for allowing me to testify. I urge you to pass HB637.

Sincerely,
Eileen Chiwa

morikawa2 - Shaun

From: Edward Thompson, III on behalf of HUS testimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 8:21 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: FW: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 12:05 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: archerygal001@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

Submitted on: 2/5/2013

Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
FRANCINE KENYON	AMC DEAF GROUP	Comments Only	No

Comments: DEAF PEOPLE, INCLUDING SENIOR CITIZENS, WHO GATHER REGULARLY ON SATURDAYS AND/OR SUNDAYS AT ALA MOANA FOOD COURT FOR LUNCH AND AFTERNOON SOCIAL BECAUSE THERE IS NO "HOME" FOR THEM TO GATHER AS THEY USED TO AT HSOD FORMERLY LOCATED AT MOILIILI COMMUNITY CENTER. THEY STRONGLY SUPPORT HB637 AND REQUEST THAT INTERPRETER REFERRAL SERVICES BE ADDED TO CSC BILL BECAUSE WITHOUT THE SERVICES, THEY WILL FACE A DIFFICULT HARDSHIP WITHOUT COMMUNICATION ACCESS. KIMIYO NAKAMIYO, ALMA HATAKEYAMA, HILDA SILVA, SHARON DRUMMOND, HARRIET UYENO, JANEL WEHRING, DOUGLAS TONG, ANNIE YUEN, EULA PELE, JUAN LOPEZ (ALL SIGNED)

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Aloha Representative Belatti, Chair of House Committee on Health, Representative Mela Carrol, Chair of Human Services, and committee members of Health and Human Services:

I do support HB637 for the Comprehensive Service Center (CSC) because I support Deaf people what we need as students and community members. We have education and we feel we also need fairness with hearing schools. Our Deaf school and Deaf people are small, but we learned in history class about our rights and still need your support for the CSC, interpreter referral services, and independent living services.

Thank you for listening to my testimony. I urge you to pass HB637.

Sincerely,

Fritz-Ann Marie Divina

8th Grade Student

Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind

3440 Leahi Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96815

Aloha Representative Belatti, Chair of House Committee on Health, Representative Mela Carrol, Chair of Human Services, and committee members of Health and Human Services:

Hello my name is Grace Hika and I am a junior at Kalaheo High School. I would like to tell you my story. For the last three years I've been battling leukemia and because of the chemotherapy I have gone deaf. There are others in our community with stories like mine. And imagine how much more people in the future will have chemo and become deaf like me. I use an interpreter daily at school; if I do not have my interpreter, there is no way for me to access my education. I desire my family to learn how to communicate with me so that I don't feel left out and neglected, and the Comprehensive Services Center would be able to provide families with deaf children the language needed classes.

I plan to go to college in the future and if I will be successful and independent, I will soon need to learn how to be independent. Without the independent life skills services, I think I would be staying with my parents.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of deaf and hard of hearing students in the mainstreaming public school system.

Please support HB637 to provide these services.

Sincerely,

Grace Hika

Daughter of Gregory Hika; gegory.m.hika.mil@mail.mil

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

**REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE DEE MORIKAWA, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 637, MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
AND OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013 AT 11:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329**

My name is Greg Hika and I am the father of a deaf child. I am a Soldier with the Hawaii Army National Guard and have been in the military for 23 years. I am fairly new to the deaf family (2.5 years) now and have learned many hard lessons thus far about the deaf family. Yes normally we refer to this family as the deaf community; however I have seen and learned that they are more of family than some I have seen in my career. I am an indirect user of the Hawaii Interpreting Services (HIS) and depend on them for their services to educate my child.

I want to submit my testimony in support with intent of House Bill 637, Making a Grant for the Establishment and Operation of a Comprehensive Service Center because of my essential need for effective, efficient communication access between my child, school, hospitals, colleges and potential employers in the future. I have used both Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and (HIS) services many times for hospital visits, operations and chemotherapy treatments. Yes this is for my daughter who lost her hearing during her treatment for cancer. I cannot as parent deny my child everything I can to succeed in life; however I am not a millionaire and am in need of services such as these. I have a need to learn American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate with my daughter. I need interpreting services for things like career exploration in the medical field where my daughter's career dreams lay. However, I heard that HIS contract with VR will expire June 30, 2013 and there will be no funds beginning July 1, 2013. If there is no interpreter referral services, then it will be a great struggle for me to arrange further life enhancements that I have thus far set in place for my child. Is it not (according to our constitution) that we are all created equal, that we all have inalienable rights under our constitution. All Americans have a right to live independently and be productive citizens.

Please allocate monies for Interpreter Referral Services in the CSC bill.

Again, I firmly urge you to passing the House Bill No. 637 to have the Comprehensive Service Center be established and operated to serve the entire Deaf community in the state.

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

Sincerely,

Gregory M. Hika Jr
Parent of Deaf Consumer
44-141 Hako Street #2
Kaneohe, HI 96744
Gregory.m.hika.mil@mail.mil

Representative Mele Carroll, Chair
Representative Bert Kobayashi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Human Services

Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health

House Bill No. 637, Making a Grant for the Establishment and Operation of a Comprehensive
Service Center

Tuesday, February 5, 2013 At 11:00AM
Conference Room 329

My name is Heather Benjamin and I am the President of Hawaii Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (HRID). HRID is the local chapter of the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). Our mission is to provide effective communication access between individuals who use American Sign Language and those who use spoken English.

We, the interpreters of HRID are in strong support of House Bill 637, making a grant for the establishment and operation of the Comprehensive Service Center.

The services provided at the Comprehensive Service Center are essential for Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals to maintain an independent quality of life and be contributing members of the Hawai'i community.

It was brought to our attention that as of June 30th, 2013 funding for interpreter referral services and independent living skills will expire and the contract will not be renewed after July 1st, 2013. By providing an interpreter referral agency it allows the state departments and other businesses to comply with the ADA law in an efficient and effective manner as well as ensuring communication access for all parties involved. Other services such as independent living skills are essential for those disenfranchised individuals to become contributing members of society.

By passing this bill we are ensuring that these services will allow them to continue to be active participants in our diverse community.

Thank you. We strongly urge you to pass this bill on behalf of the Deaf Community.

Sincerely,

Heather Benjamin
President of Hawaii Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
hrid.president@gmail.com
P.O Box 12200
Honolulu, Hi 96828

February 4, 2013

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

Re: Support for HB 637 Making a Grant for the Establishment of a
Comprehensive Service Center

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

My name is Judy Coryell and I am the parent of two deaf daughters. This bill is of critical importance to my daughters, to the deaf students and deaf faculty at colleges in the state, and to Hawai'i's deaf adults, deaf children, and their families.

As I understand it, the Center will provide much needed support to deaf individuals so that they can become more independent and successful in life. A major service at the Center will be to provide classes to improve English and communication skills (reading, writing, speech reading), American Sign Language classes, mathematics, and computer literacy. My daughters as well as many deaf people in the community can benefit greatly from these educational opportunities..

A Center such as this has been the dream of the Deaf Community since 1972 and the need has been documented and recommended in county- and state-funded studies published in 1976, 2001, and 2009. We know that a Center for the Deaf people of Hawai'i is a major need in the community and this bill for the Comprehensive Service Center is a start towards a full array of services and support.

The benefits of a Comprehensive Service Center for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals are numerous. The Center's concept:

- offers an option for a cost-effective, convenient, centralized, and efficient delivery of essential educational programs in one space;
- enhances communication and literacy skills of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals and their families;
- assists 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;

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.

I implore you support the Comprehensive Service Center in Hawai'i. This will enable deaf people to have a positive and fully accessible environment to obtain necessary

support from service providers who sign and are familiar with deaf people and deaf culture. Please allow this Center to become a reality by appropriating funds to begin operations and establishment of services.

A new concern has just emerged in the Deaf Community and deserves your serious attention. We have recently been informed that Vocational Rehabilitation has cut funding for the Interpreting Referral Service—providing the referral of sign language interpreters to ensure access for deaf individuals in the workplace, in medical facilities, in educational programs, etc. Currently the Interpreter Referral Service that has held the VR contract since 2007 is Hawai'i Interpreting Services. Loss of this service would impact a huge segment of the deaf population. My daughters have used sign language interpreters for many years for job training, support in their jobs, medical appointments, college courses and other community education opportunities. These interpreters were referred by Hawai'i Interpreting Services. I hope that HB 637 can be amended to include funding of \$180,000 per year for this sorely needed interpreter referral service for the Deaf community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith Coryell

Aloha Representative Belatti, Chair of House Committee on Health, Representative Mela Carrol, Chair of Human Services, and committee members of Health and Human Services:

Hi, my name is Kammi Koza and I am soon to be deaf college student. I want to go to school to become a counselor for Deaf youth. I hope that DVR will have funds to assist me with the services I need for independent living. I used to work at an independent living center in Honolulu, where I helped deaf people achieve their goals. My dream is to help Hawaii's deaf youth and other community members achieve their independent living goals. People in general need interpreter services, not only deaf people but hearing people like yourself; communication is the key to our communities success in living side by side.

Please support HB637 and thank you for allowing me to testify. I urge you to pass HB637.

Sincerely,

Kammi Koza
98-1355 Apt A Nola Street, Pearl City, HI 96782

morikawa2 - Shaun

From: Edward Thompson, III on behalf of HUS testimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 8:27 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: FW: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM
Attachments: kkctestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 7:49 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: kekaicummings@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

Submitted on: 2/4/2013
Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kekai Kaaumoana-Cummings	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Aloha Representative Belatti, Chair of House Committee on Health, Representative Mela Carrol, Chair of Human Services, and committee members of Health and Human Services:

My name is Lena Merrill and I am a deaf high school student at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind. I had the experience of having a deaf worker from Signs of Self come to my school and teach us about independent living skills. As a deaf high school senior, I do not need to depend on my hearing parents to teach me all about independence. This service has helped us seniors a lot; we learned how to appropriately socialize, dress, and communicate. Without that service deaf students would have a difficult time learning independent living skills.

In the year 2010 I won Miss Hawaii Outstanding Teen, and without the services of the interpreter I would never have had that awesome opportunity.

In the future what will happen to other deaf students having no access to services individually to learn how to be an independent community member. In my near future after graduation I will most definitely need interpreter services to succeed in college. If anything important occurs in my life, I hope to have the confidence in Hawaii's government to meet my needs and rights as a deaf citizen.

Thank you for allowing me to testify. I urge you to pass HB637 on behalf of the students at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Sincerely,

Lena Merrill
Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind
3440 Leahi Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96815

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From: Edward Thompson, III on behalf of HUS testimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 8:24 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: FW: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 9:36 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: clearaccessinterpreting@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mala Arkin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha, My name is Mala Arkin and I am a communication advocate for the community at large. I am also an English/American Sign Language interpreter. I am in strong support of House Bill 637, Making a Grant for the Establishment and Operation of the Comprehensive Service Center. The services provided at the Comprehensive Service Center are essential for Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals to maintain an independent life and be contributing members of the Hawai'i community. It was brought to my attention that as of June 30th, 2013 funding for interpreter referral services and independent living skills will expire and the contracts will not be renewed after July 1st, 2013. By providing an interpreter referral agency it allows the state departments and other businesses to comply with the ADA law in an efficient and effective manner as well as ensuring communication access for all parties involved. Other services such as independent living skills are essential for those disenfranchised individuals to become contributing members of society. By passing this bill we are ensuring that these services will allow them to continue to be active participants in our diverse community. I strongly encourage the passage of this bill. Mahalo, Mala Arkin
clearaccessinterpreting@gmail.com PO Box 11988 Honolulu, HI 96828

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Aloha Representative Belatti, Chair of House Committee on Health, Representative Mela Carrol, Chair of Human Services, and committee members of Health and Human Services:

Hello my name is Mariah Dawn Ralar Punzalan and I am in the 8th grade at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind. What is important to me is the Comprehensive Services Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, also interpreter referral services and independent living services. There are many deaf students at my school who agree with me and support HB637 to provide services for all our future. In school we learned about our right for equal access to communication with our fellow hearing society. We deaf people want to know what important information hearing people say to us.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of the students of Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind. I urge you to pass HB637.

Sincerely,

Mariah Dawn Ralar Punzalan
Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind
3440 Leahi Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96815

morikawa2 - Shaun

From: Edward Thompson, III on behalf of HUS testimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 8:26 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: FW: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM
Attachments: pebttestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 8:14 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: ekoluborge@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patrick Ekolu Borge	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Aloha Representative Belatti, Chair of House Committee on Health, Representative Mela Carrol, Chair of Human Services, and committee members of Health and Human Services:

Hello my name is Ralph Collier and I am a deaf father of 4 hearing children. I am an alumnus of Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB), and the assistant chairperson for the 100th Anniversary of the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind Committee. In 2014 HSDB will celebrate its 100th Anniversary, and we are planning a large celebration with many alumni returning to Hawaii to participate in this event. Our committees are looking forward to offering the alumni the opportunity to visit Hawaii's many attractions. However upon hearing that funding for the interpreter referral services will soon run out, I am very concerned that our deaf alumni and their families may be let down by our possibly deficient interpreter referral services and miss out on enjoying our historic places.

Thank you for allowing me to testify. In behalf of deaf parents and HSDB alumni, I urge you to pass HB637 in support of the Comprehensive Services Center, the interpreter referral services, and independent living services.

Sincerely,

Ralph Collier

99-943 Halawa Heights Rd., Aiea, HI 96701

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Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 8:00 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: natividadrg@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Renante Natividad	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: I support HB 637 because we need the funding to provide interpreter services for our Deaf Community. We need independent living services too to help us get on track with our living and advocate our life in the hearing world. With out interpreter, who will translate for me when I need to go to a doctor and meeting with my work place? I need interpreter to help me understand the issues around me and be able to understand clearly with the hearing world. Please do not cut the funding for this services. Keep HB 637 alive!! Thank you!

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 8:14 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: sarah.comerford.24@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB637 on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM

HB637

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sarah Comerford	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing in support of HB637 because it is essential that a comprehensive services center be established in the State of Hawaii to support the independent living initiatives of those individuals who require it and the continuing education desires of those who wish to expand their minds in regard to all issues that are Deaf related. No Center for the Deaf has ever existed in the State of Hawaii, something that places us far behind our Mainland counterparts. Should this measure be passed, the State has the opportunity to provide much needed services to scores of Deaf individuals and community members who currently find themselves in need by providing education, support services, counseling, and perhaps even interpreting referral services to Hawaii's Deaf population. As these services become more and more difficult to find, it become imperative that we come together to establish this comprehensive service center for all of Hawaii's Deaf community.

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Sent: Monday, February 04, 2013 7:48 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: gecko50t@gmail.com
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HB637

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HUS/HLT on Feb 5, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wayne Takara	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support our deaf community need helping and improving our services. Don't cut our deaf services. I am a deaf federal worker at the Department of Veterans Affairs. I need the interpreters for meeting with my workers.

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REPRESENTATIVE MELE CARROLL, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE BERT KOBAYASHI, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE DEE MORIKAWA, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

HOUSE BILL NO. 637, MAKING A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
AND OPERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2013 AT 11:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329

I, Cheryl Mizusawa, am a private citizen, distributor for the Better Body System, and leadership for Senior Citizen for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. I learned that Dept of Vocational Rehabilitation will end its contract for Interpreter Referral Services with the state on June 30, 2013 and will not be renewed! I use the interpreting service for many years and have requested interpreters for my training business, during my stay in the hospital for the surgery since no one in my family would interpreted for me. If these services end I will not have the effective, efficient communication access I need and will not fully participate independently as contributing citizen in the General Community.

Please add the Interpreter Referral Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the CSC bill. The service is very essential for the Deaf Community to have full communication access.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of the Deaf Community.

I strongly urge to have this important bill be passed out of the committee.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Mizusawa
damizu@me.com