

LATE

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 30, 2013 7:08 PM  
**To:** HMS Testimony  
**Cc:** jose@hawaiihispanicnews.org  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB58 on Jan 31, 2013 13:15PM

**SB58**

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for HMS on Jan 31, 2013 13:15PM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jose Villa	Hawaii Hispanic News	Support	No

Comments: Our staff supports the establishment of a Language Access Center.

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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LATE

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 30, 2013 7:10 PM  
**To:** HMS Testimony  
**Cc:** josevilla@latinbusinesshawaii.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB58 on Jan 31, 2013 13:15PM

**SB58**

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for HMS on Jan 31, 2013 13:15PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jose Villa	Latin Chamber of Commerce	Support	No

Comments: Our membership and board of director supports the establishment of a Language Access Center.

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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30 January 2013

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair and  
Members of the Committee on Human Services  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI

Dear Chair Chun Oakland and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SB 58, Relating to Language Access  
Establishes and provides appropriations for a statewide language access  
resource center and multilingual website pilot project to be administered by  
the Office of Language Access

This testimony is in support of the above-mentioned subject. There are over 140,000 Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals in the State of Hawaii that are sometimes discriminated against or denied government services on the basis of their English language ability. Their inability to speak and read English language coupled with the severe shortage of competent interpreters and translators in the state often results in inefficient and ineffective delivery of critical government services that are desperately needed by these individuals.

Passing this bill will not only provide language assistance to LEP individuals but also enhances the ability of the agencies to provide needed services effectively to these individuals and to adhere to the federal civil rights law. I urge the Committee's positive consideration on this bill

Sincerely,



Margarita L. Hopkins  
Past President, Hilo Visayan Club  
746 Hele Mauna Street  
Hilo, HI 96720

## HAWAII STATE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

To: Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland  
Vice-Chair Josh Green, M.D.  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

From: Veronika Geronimo, Executive Director  
Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Hearing Date and Time: January 31, 2013, 1:15 pm

Place: Conference Room 016

RE: SB58 - SUPPORT

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The Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence writes in support of S.B. 58, which will establish and provide appropriations for a statewide language access resource center and multilingual website pilot project to be administered by the office of language access.

Immigrant women are among the most marginalized victims of domestic violence in Hawaii. Language barriers significantly impact the ability of limited English proficient survivors to access critical information, social services, and other community resources that protect them from or help them with abusive, isolating and dangerous relationships. According to the US Census Bureau, in Hawaii, 24.4% of population speak a language other than English in the home (compared to 19.6% nationally)

Limited-English proficiency also impacts immigrant survivors' ability to find gainful employment to build financially independent lives and achieve economic independence. LEPs are often closely associated with low earnings, poverty, and hardship. In Hawaii, 32% of LEPs earn less than \$10,000 annually, with 75% of LEPs earning less than \$35,000 annually. Research on domestic violence risk factors suggests that poverty traps women in violent relationships.

Trained and proficient interpreters, and resources to information in their language will help LEP survivors access the services that may help them find a place to live, find a job or help them find safety.

Thank you for your consideration.

Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
810 Richards Street, Suite 960  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
[vgeronimo@hscadv.org](mailto:vgeronimo@hscadv.org) | [www.hscadv.org](http://www.hscadv.org)  
Tel: 808-832-9316 ext. 104 | Fax: 808-841-6028

**DATE:** January 30, 2013

**TO:** The Honorable Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair and Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee on Human Services

**FROM:** Dominic Inocelda, Clinical Administrator, Susannah Wesley Community Center

**RE:** Testimony In Support of SB 58, Relating to Language Access

Good Afternoon, Senator Chun Oakland and Vice Chair, Senator Green, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services. My name is Dominic Inocelda, I am writing in support of SB 58, Relating to Language Access.

I have been privileged to work with limited and non-English speaking persons for most of my work life. During all of my years of working with the Susannah Wesley Community Center in various administrative positions I have directly experienced the magic that happens when a limited or non-English speaking person is able to communicate and understand what is going on because someone was able to provide language interpreter assistance. For many immigrants, learning to speak English is a high priority along with all the other priorities needed to adjust and make a living in Hawaii. However, learning to speak English at a proficiently high level takes time, practice, and consistent study. For some who may have background in English in their home country, learning is much easier and for others without any familiarity with English it could take years. Usually, young people can learn English much faster due to their consistent interaction with English speaking students and friends in school. For many older non-English speakers, English proficiency is very difficult to attain. During this period of learning and gaining the skills to confidently speak in English the need for interpreter assistance is key to helping newcomers fully adjust and actively participate in their new life in Hawaii.

Census data for 2010 shows that 17.8 % of the Hawaii's total population (1,392,313) are foreign born and of this total, 25.6% speak another language other than English at home; this indicates a significant number of persons that could utilize interpretation assistance. Additionally, about 3000 to 5000 new immigrants arrive in Hawaii yearly.

With the creation of the Office of Language Access in 2007, an established State office could now focus on language access resource development and further explore the development of trained and competent interpreters and translators. OLA's work in the past couple of years has resulted in an identified need to explore the creation of a language access resource center within the Office of Language Access. As the number of limited and/or Non-English speaking persons continue to grow in Hawaii, further development of language access interpreter and translation resources is vitally needed. I thank you for the opportunity to write in support of SB 58.