
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The need for certified medical interpreters in
2 various languages is growing. Certified medical interpreters
3 foster improved health care outcomes, patient safety, and
4 patient/provider communication. More hospitals and other health
5 care facilities are required to have medical interpreters to
6 obtain or maintain accreditation.

7 Although there are two national certifying agencies for
8 medical interpreters, no individual from Hawaii has been
9 certified to date. A major obstacle to this certification has
10 been the costs associated with the required forty-hour training
11 to qualify for certification and to sit for the certification
12 test. The state of Oregon has addressed this issue by providing
13 scholarships to train and develop its own pool of certified
14 medical interpreters.

15 Moreover, there are no medical glossaries in the primary
16 foreign languages spoken in Hawaii, including Asian and Pacific
17 Island languages. Medical interpreters require medical
18 glossaries to provide accurate and safe interpretation.



1 The purpose of this Act is to:

2 (1) Develop a pool of certified medical interpreters in
3 Hawaii by providing financial assistance for training
4 and certification in medical interpretation from a
5 nationally-recognized and accredited certification
6 program; and

7 (2) Develop medical glossaries for the primary foreign
8 languages spoken in Hawaii.

9 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
11 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 for the
12 office of language access to develop a pool of certified medical
13 interpreters in the primary foreign languages spoken in Hawaii
14 by providing financial assistance to one hundred medical
15 interpreters for training and certification in medical
16 interpretation from a nationally-recognized and accredited
17 medical interpreter certification program, to be paid directly
18 to the certifying or training program on behalf of the award
19 recipient; provided that award recipients shall provide
20 hours of uncompensated medical interpreter services to the State
21 and state-funded agencies within two years of receiving



1 certification from a nationally-recognized and accredited
2 medical interpreter program.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
4 health for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 for the
8 office of language access, in collaboration with the center for
9 interpretation and translation studies at the University of
10 Hawaii at Manoa and other language service providers, to develop
11 medical glossaries for the primary foreign languages spoken in
12 Hawaii.

13 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
14 health for the purposes of this Act.

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 16 2014



H.B. NO. 1748

Report Title:

Office of Language Access; Language Interpreters; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for financial assistance for Hawaii interpreters for training and certification in medical or healthcare interpretation and for the development of medical glossaries in the primary foreign languages spoken in Hawaii.

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