

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 2226 HD2
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
April 4, 2016, 9:15 a.m., Conference Room 211

To: Sen. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair; Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair and Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

From: Charlene Cuaresma, MPH, Principal Investigator
Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness, Research and Training
ccuaresma@gmail.com

Description: Appropriates funds for three full-time equivalent permanent positions within the Office of Language Access. (HB2226 HD2)

Dear Sen. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair; Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair; Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means; Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair; Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair; and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

My name is Charlene Cuaresma. I am happy to submit strong support for this bill, as principal Investigator for the Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness Research and Training (AANCART). We are a Community Network Program of the National Cancer Institute. AANCART was established to address cancer disparities among Asian Americans through research, education, training, and advocacy.

We strongly urge you to fully fund the three FTE permanent positions for the Office of Language Access. They are critical for complying with civil rights protections for language access, which are key to overcome barriers to health care and many government and human services. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, there are over thirty languages that are spoken at home in Hawai'i. Among the top are Philippine languages Ilokano, Tagalog, Bisyan, and Japanese. Of these groups, those who need the most assistance with language access services are likely to be poor, elderly, or work in service and agricultural industries. With great dedication of a few, tremendous strides have been made despite years of inadequate funding for the Office of Language Access. Much more gains can be realized with this bill for a modest allocation to fill three staff positions. Diversity and multilingualism of Hawai'i's people are a unique asset to protect and invest in. The result of a healthy economy, healthy community, and a civil and compassionate society are priceless.

Thank you for hearing this bill, and for the opportunity to offer my strong support.

Sincerely,
Charlene Cuaresma

Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President
P. O. Box 270126 ★ Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827

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From: Jake Manegdeg, President, Filipino American Citizens League

Report Title: Office of Language Access; Employee Positions; Appropriation (\$)

Description: Appropriates funds for three full-time equivalent permanent positions within the Office of Language Access. (HB2226 HD2)

Dear Sen. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair; Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair; Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means; Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair; Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair; and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

My name is Jake Manegdeg. I am proud to strongly support this bill. The League was formed over ten years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

Funding of these positions for the Office of Language Access is vital to the equal access and non-discrimination of health and government services that are essential for people's survival today. Staff positions to implement the provisions of Act 217 of the language access law are more cost effective than litigation for non-compliance of civil rights laws.

Thank you very much for hearing this bill and for your consideration of its merit.

Very Sincerely,

Jake Manegdeg
President, Filipino American Citizens League



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From: Rouel Velasco, Chair
National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 12

Report Title: Office of Language Access; Employee Positions; Appropriation (\$)
Description: Appropriates funds for three full-time equivalent permanent positions within the Office of Language Access. (HB2226 HD2)

My name is Rouel Velasco. As Chair of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 12, I strongly support this bill.

NaFFAA represents the interests of Filipinos in Hawai‘i, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands. NaFFAA Region XII is an affiliate of the National NaFFAA. Washington policy-makers, private industry and national advocacy groups recognize NaFFAA as the Voice of Filipinos and Filipino Americans throughout the United States. We are a non-partisan, non-profit national affiliation of more than five hundred Filipino-American institutions and umbrella organizations that span twelve regions throughout the continental United States and U.S. Pacific territories.

I commend the Office of Language Access, OLA volunteer Advisory Council Members, and the many partners in the public and private sectors, who have worked collaboratively and persistently to build the state’s capacity and infrastructure for language access to vital human services during severe budget shortages. It is time to re-instate staff positions in order to maintain and build upon the progress made.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of language access. All of Hawai‘i’s people will benefit when the most vulnerable of our family and friends are assisted to fully engage in caring for themselves, their families, and communities.

Sincerely,

Rouel Velasco, Chair, NaFFAA Region 12



Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.

... a non-profit organization with a mission to address the global nursing shortage by providing guidance and assistance for nursing colleagues to obtain their professional license in nursing.

NAMI, P.O. Box 2034 Aiea, HI 96701

E-mail: bramosrazon@aol.com

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Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

From: Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDONA
President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.

Report Title: Office of Language Access; Employee Positions; Appropriation (\$)

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Dear Sen. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair; Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair; Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means; Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair; Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair; and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

My name is Beatrice Ramos-Razon. As the founder and president of NAMI (Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.), I am proud to submit our strong support for this bill. NAMI's membership is comprised of over 75 volunteer nurses, instructors, allied health care professionals, and Filipino leaders, who are dedicated to improve the health of Hawai'i's people through education, mentoring, advocacy and service.

NAMI actively advocated for Hawaii's Language Access bill in 2006. Funding of these three positions will support state offices to carry out provisions of Title VI, which protects the language access rights of limited English proficient individuals. This is important because income inequality during these austere times makes access to government services even more critical to keep people afloat and able to participate fully in the transactions of daily living as responsible members of their communities and families. This small investment now is critical to the capacity building for strong and vibrant communities tomorrow.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for hearing these bills.

Sincerely,
Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDONA, President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 03, 2016 9:16 PM
To: JDLTestimony
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2226 on Apr 4, 2016 09:15AM

HB2226

Submitted on: 4/3/2016

Testimony for JDL/WAM on Apr 4, 2016 09:15AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dina R Yoshimi	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Over the past three years, I have become quite familiar with the exceptional work OLA undertakes to support the development of language access plans for State agencies, monitor compliance with State and federal civil rights laws regarding language access, and educate all sectors of the State -- legal and medical personnel, interpreters/translators, etc. -- regarding requirements for federal compliance and, most critically, updates on changes in best practices, which are constantly under review and revision by federal agencies. In light of the growing interest from and involvement of the US Department of Justice in matters associated with language access and language discrimination, Hawai'i is truly fortunate to have had the foresight to establish an Office of Language Access to promote ethical practices and just procedures in the State's activities. Through their tireless efforts, this essential work has been carried out by the current staff of three employees -- three employees to supervise the civil rights compliance of an entire state, a state where one in four residents speaks a language other than English at home. These numbers don't add up in any language. I strongly encourage you to fully fund HB2226. Support for this bill will make a significant difference statewide, both for those who work with and provide services to our multilingual population, and for those who depend on meaningful and effective language access plans and well informed State workers, for access to basic needs including education, health services, housing, and nutritional assistance, among other critical services. Thank you for your careful consideration of and support for this HB2226.

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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