



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 03/21/2016
Time: 02:30 PM
Location: 309
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2981, SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Recognizes American Sign Language as a world language, and allows public school students who pass courses in American Sign Language to receive credit toward world language graduation requirements. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Department offers elective courses in American Sign Language (ASL). Classes are being conducted at three high schools, and any secondary school may offer a course in ASL.

The determination of whether elective classes in any world language are offered is made at the school level in response to the needs of the school community. It is based on the existence of adequate resources, student interest and enrollment, and the availability of a qualified teacher.

Board of Education Policy 104.1 (previously know as 4540) requires two credits in one of the specified programs of study: World Language, Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education. For World Language, a student must take two credits in a single World Language and credits must be taken in sequence with consecutive course numbers in the study of one language.

Further, a student who successfully completes an ASL course may also opt to receive credit for a course towards meeting the elective credit requirements to receive a high school graduation diploma.

As the Department already provides this credit earning opportunity, we respectfully suggest SB 2981 SD1 is not necessary.



Hi DOE Graduation Brochure.pdf



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 21, 2016

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senate Bill 2981, SD1 – Relating to Education

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports Senate Bill 2981, SD1 – Relating to Education. The purpose of this bill is to recognize American Sign Language (ASL) as a world language, and allow public school students who pass courses in American Sign Language (ASL) to receive credit for the courses toward language graduation requirements.

This bill in recognizing ASL as a language that could be offered in high school to fulfill language requirements for graduation will improve opportunities for students in Hawaii by adding a language to school curricula. It will allow students to learn a new language and culture and possibly assist in adding to the ASL/English interpreter pool in Hawaii.

Offering students the opportunity to learn ASL in high school is commendable and will increase students' knowledge about different cultures in our local community and hopefully enhance the identities of Deaf and hard of hearing students who use ASL on a daily basis.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG
Chairperson
Legislative Committee

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

March 19, 2016

Testimony by Billy Kekua, President

Aloha State Association of the Deaf

www.deafaloha.org

Support for SB2981 RELATING TO EDUCATION

American Sign Language; Official World Language;
Public Schools; World Language Requirement

Recognizes American Sign Language as a world language,
and allows public school students who pass courses in
American Sign Language to receive credit toward
world language graduation requirements. (SD1)

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Representative Roy M. Takumi, Chair

Representative Takashi Ohno, Vice Chair

Dear Chair Takumi and committee members,

The majority of our membership heavily use the American Sign Language (ASL) as the way of life to communicate with family, friends, and everyone in the society. Often times we depend on interpreters to facilitate the communication in many areas such as workplaces, appointments, entertainment/events, and others. Thus, we feel that ASL should be included in the curriculum to satisfy the foreign language requirement.

It will be a great opportunity for all students to get many professional benefits from learning ASL. There are plethora of job opportunities can be a life-saving experience for everyone if they can communicate in ASL with DHHDB consumers. Interpreters, doctors, teachers, business owners, and more professional positions. The healthy society should be like this - everyone can enjoy their beautiful lives in ease and peace.

With the reasons presented in this letter, we respectfully request that the bill is to be passed. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to present our testimony with you.

Malama pono.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2016 9:09 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: CANtheCANT@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2981 on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM*

SB2981

Submitted on: 3/20/2016

Testimony for EDN on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hawaii Deaf Surfriders Association	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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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Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2981 on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM*

SB2981

Submitted on: 3/20/2016

Testimony for EDN on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Darlene Ewan	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

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March 20, 2016
TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senate Bill 2981 SD1 - Relating to Education

Representative Roy Takumi
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 444
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Takumi,

My name is LisaAnn Tom and I am in support of Senate Bill 2981 SD1. American Sign Language has been recognized by 42 states as being a foreign language, one which demands the same respect and intensity to learn as Hawaiian language, Japanese, or Spanish.

Right now there is a viral testimony occurring across the nation #whyISign and from all those testimonies, most state the love of the language and how it generates communication between family, friends, and is the backbone of the community, much like Hawaiian language identifies and is at the core of the Hawaiian people.

Please vote yes. Support this bill. So many middle and high school students wish to take ASL as a foreign language. We have the opportunity to heighten the status of ASL and join other states in recognizing it as its own language.

Mahalo,



LisaAnn Tom
Honolulu, HI

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2016 10:41 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: jrlcjc@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2981 on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM*

SB2981

Submitted on: 3/20/2016

Testimony for EDN on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joel Matusof	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2016 10:39 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: heather.interpreter@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2981 on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM

SB2981

Submitted on: 3/20/2016

Testimony for EDN on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heather Benjamin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: March 20, 2016 TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION Senate Bill 2981 SD1 - Relating to Education Representative Roy Takumi Hawaii State Capitol Hearing on Monday, March 21, 2016 2:30pm in House Conference room 309 Dear Chair Takumi, My name is Heather Benjamin and I am in support of Senate Bill 2981 SD1. American Sign Language has been recognized by 42 states as being a foreign language, one which demands the same respect and intensity to learn as Hawaiian language, Japanese, or Spanish. I am professional sign language interpreter and have been interpreting for 15 years. Prior to interpreting American Sign Language (ASL) I spent many years studying the language. I was fortunate, where I grew up, that ASL was taught at a local community college. As a high school student, my parents supported me by paying for an ASL class at our local community college nearby. If I had the option to take this class in high school I would have. Learning ASL and learning about the Deaf community, which began as a hobby, became a profession. I would like ASL to be taught in middle and high school so children can begin young and developing skills that may lead to a career. Please vote yes. Support this bill. We have the opportunity to heighten the status of ASL and join other states in recognizing it as its own language. Mahalo, Heather Benjamin Honolulu, HI

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To: EDNtestimony
Cc: poulosmom@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2981 on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM*

SB2981

Submitted on: 3/18/2016

Testimony for EDN on Mar 21, 2016 14:30PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Poulos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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