

February 11, 2015

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

Support for S.B. No. 900, Relating to State Seal of Biliteracy

My name is Christine Holmes and I am American Sign Language Coordinator at Kapiolani Community College living in the state of Hawai'i.

I am writing to express our strong support for S.B. No. 900 of the ***Hawai'i State Seal of Biliteracy*** that is being considered in the Senate.

Conferring the state biliteracy seal to individuals who are literate in two or more languages will support the economic growth of our state. It will also give them an edge in the ever-competitive global economy where multilingualism is the bar.

Research shows that the attainment of fluency in multiple languages is a goal that is achievable. Multilingualism is a valued trait on many levels at various political and institutional levels. And knowing more than two languages gives a competitive advantage for individuals in the global economy.

Being part of Deaf community, we are able to read and write in English and speak in American Sign Language (ASL). We understand the value and advantages of being culturally and linguistically bilingual. And this is also why we fully embrace the opportunity for our future deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing children to be conferred the state seal of biliteracy upon their graduation from Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind and/or secondary school.

There are members of the Deaf Community who grew up in bilingual settings. For instance, a deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing with deaf or hearing family reads and writes in English and speaks (signs in) American Sign Language. There are much more who did not grow up bilingual due to parents or guardians not knowing American Sign Language. These individuals became bilingual when they interact with other deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing people.

The Deaf Community is much lower on the socio-economic ladder and having a biliteracy seal will benefit them in employment. And the state of Hawai'i will benefit from a better-educated workforce to remain competitive in the global economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity in providing my testimony to the Committee.

Christine Holmes  
ASL Coordinator  
Kapiolani Community College

LATE

February 11, 2015

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

Support for S.B. No. 900, Relating to State Seal of Bilingualism

My name is Christine Holmes and I am the President of Gallaudet University Alumni Association of Hawaii Chapter living in the state of Hawai'i.

I am writing to express our strong support for S.B. No. 900 of the ***Hawai'i State Seal of Bilingualism*** that is being considered in the Senate.

Conferring the state bilingual seal to individuals who are literate in two or more languages will support the economic growth of our state. It will also give them an edge in the ever-competitive global economy where multilingualism is the bar.

Research shows that the attainment of fluency in multiple languages is a goal that is achievable. Multilingualism is a valued trait on many levels at various political and institutional levels. And knowing more than two languages gives a competitive advantage for individuals in the global economy.

Being part of Deaf community, we are able to read and write in English and speak in American Sign Language (ASL). We understand the value and advantages of being culturally and linguistically bilingual. And this is also why we fully embrace the opportunity for our future deaf children to be conferred the state seal of bilingualism upon their graduation from Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind and/or secondary school.

There are members of the Deaf Community who grew up in bilingual settings. For instance, a deaf family reads and writes in English and speaks (signs in) American Sign Language. There are much more who did not grow up bilingual due to parents or guardians not knowing American Sign Language. These individuals became bilingual when they interact with other deaf people.

The Deaf Community is much lower on the socio-economic ladder and having a bilingual seal will benefit them in employment. And the state of Hawai'i will benefit from a better-educated workforce to remain competitive in the global economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity in providing my testimony to the Committee.

Christine Holmes  
President  
Gallaudet University Alumni Association of Hawaii

February 10, 2015

LATE

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senate Bill 900 – Relating to Education

Aloha, My name is Colleen Cidade, President of the Aloha State Association of the Deaf (ASAD). Our organization has proudly represented all deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing people in the state of the Hawaii for over 40 years.

It is on behalf of ASAD that I submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 900, which will establish the state seal of biliteracy program and appropriates funds for the implementation of the program. A fundamental mission of ASAD is to strengthen the standing of Hawaii's deaf, deaf blind, and hard of hearing residents. A majority of the Deaf community is bilingual, so we possess a first-hand understanding of the value of bilingualism. Unfortunately, its value has not been underscored by the educational system. This bill will give biliteracy the merit it warrants. Besides, this will enable the students of the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind – a bilingual program in and of itself – to graduate as trilinguals!

This bill will not just influence the academic pedigree of deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing children with a bilingual-bicultural education. It will also impact family members of deaf, deaf blind, and hard of hearing people, especially children or siblings. This is where this bill becomes something greater than academic merit. This bill has the potential bring families closer together; children and siblings of many deaf and hard of hearing people will now be empowered to share a language with those they love.

Please accept our unwavering support of this bill on behalf of ASAD.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify, and aloha nui loa.

Respectfully submitted,

COLLEEN CIDADE

President

Aloha State Association of the Deaf

February 11, 2015

LATE

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

Support for S.B. No. 900, Relating to State Seal of Biliteracy

My name is Kaimi Seminara and I am the President of Hawaii Deaf Surfriders Association living in the state of Hawai'i.

I am writing to express our strong support for S.B. No. 900 of the ***Hawai'i State Seal of Biliteracy*** that is being considered in the Senate.

Conferring the state biliteracy seal to individuals who are literate in two or more languages will support the economic growth of our state. It will also give them an edge in the ever-competitive global economy where multilingualism is the bar.

Research shows that the attainment of fluency in multiple languages is a goal that is achievable. Multilingualism is a valued trait on many levels at various political and institutional levels. And knowing more than two languages gives a competitive advantage for individuals in the global economy.

Being part of Deaf community, We are able to read and write in English and speak in American Sign Language (ASL). We understand the value and advantages of being culturally and linguistically bilingual. And this is also why we fully embrace the opportunity for our future deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing children to be conferred the state seal of biliteracy upon their graduation from Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind and/or secondary school.

There are members of the Deaf Community who grew up in bilingual settings. For instance, a deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing with deaf or hearing family reads and writes in English and speaks (signs in) American Sign Language. There are much more who did not grow up bilingual due to parents or guardians not knowing American Sign Language. These individuals became bilingual when they interact with other deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing people.

The Deaf Community is much lower on the socio-economic ladder and having a biliteracy seal will benefit them in employment. And the state of Hawai'i will benefit from a better-educated workforce to remain competitive in the global economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity in providing my testimony to the Committee.

Kaimi Seminara  
President  
Hawaii Deaf Surfriders Association



I am writing on behalf of the more than 12,500 members of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to underscore our support for a biliteracy seal option for students graduating high school in the State of Hawaii. As our world becomes more interconnected and everyone is living and working in a more global environment, language education is rapidly becoming a *sine qua non* for the 21st Century graduate.

Allowing students in the State of Hawaii to demonstrate proficiency in two languages and receive recognition for this accomplishment will position them well for continuing to develop their global competencies in preparation for college and their careers. The biliteracy seal programs, already legislated in five states, California, New York, Illinois, New Mexico and Washington, and the District of Columbia and being considered in another 12 states, encourage both native English speakers and heritage speakers to develop proficiency in two languages.

In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world where American jobs and exports are more dependent than ever on foreign markets; where Americans are engaged diplomatically and militarily around the globe as never before; and where issues such as the environment, health and disease, poverty, development, and government instability are increasingly defined as global problems that require international understanding and cooperation, the ability to communicate in languages and with cultures other than one's own has never been more vital. Even within our nation's own borders, a growing foreign-born population has far-ranging implications on the need for employees with linguistic and intercultural skills.

Yet Americans remain glaringly deficient in language skills. Although the United States is a nation of immigrants, only 9% of Americans speak a foreign language while just 18% of K–12 students and 8% of college students study a foreign language. Moreover, a decreasing number of schools are teaching languages and only 10 states require a foreign language for graduation. Monolingual Americans are graduating into a global marketplace where 22 out of 25 industrialized nations begin language studies in Grades K–5 and where 22 European Union countries mandate that students have had a minimum of 9 years of at least one foreign language.

One of the primary benefits of implementing a seal of biliteracy for high school students in Hawaii is that native and heritage speakers of other languages can demonstrate their competence in those languages and be recognized for that competence. This will be a critical way for the State of Hawaii to encourage students to demonstrate their ability in the Hawaiian language.

Our organization looks forward to working with you to inaugurate the seal of biliteracy for students in the State of Hawaii and open up the world of possibilities that this distinction will bring them.

With best regards,

Martha G. Abbott  
Executive Director

February 11, 2015

LATE

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

Support for S.B. No. 900, Relating to State Seal of Biliteracy

My name is Norman Galpin and I am the President of Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind Alumni Club living in the state of Hawai'i.

I am writing to express our strong support for S.B. No. 900 of the ***Hawai'i State Seal of Biliteracy*** that is being considered in the Senate.

Conferring the state biliteracy seal to individuals who are literate in two or more languages will support the economic growth of our state. It will also give them an edge in the ever-competitive global economy where multilingualism is the bar.

Research shows that the attainment of fluency in multiple languages is a goal that is achievable. Multilingualism is a valued trait on many levels at various political and institutional levels. And knowing more than two languages gives a competitive advantage for individuals in the global economy.

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The Deaf Community is much lower on the socio-economic ladder and having a biliteracy seal will benefit them in employment. And the state of Hawai'i will benefit from a better-educated workforce to remain competitive in the global economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity in providing my testimony to the Committee.

Norman Galpin  
Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind Alumni Club  
President



LATE

**CHINESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII**

**“CLEAH”**

夏威夷中文教育協會

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

Chinese Language Education Association in Hawaii (CLEAH)  
Moore 382, 1890 East West Road,  
Honolulu, HI. 96822  
Contact us: Song Jiang, Email: [sjiang@hawaii.edu](mailto:sjiang@hawaii.edu), Phone: 808-956-2087

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Support for S.B. No. 900, Relating to State Seal of Biliteracy

Honorable Senators: On behalf of Chinese Language Education Association in Hawaii (CLEAH), I am writing to express our full support of SB900 which proposes the establishment of a State Seal of Biliteracy. We believe that awarding the Seal to graduating high school seniors with advanced proficiency in a second language is an important recognition for the unique, rich, and diverse language assets of Hawaii's students. It is an excellent opportunity to promote second language education in K-12 schools in Hawaii and as a result greatly increase economic and cross-cultural communication power of the State.

**LATE**

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB900 on Feb 11, 2015 13:15PM  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 11, 2015 11:19:46 AM

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**SB900**

Submitted on: 2/11/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 11, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Spencer Reemelin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha, I am in support of SB900. Please open the door to true multicultural education. Support for dual language learners will only help! Mahalo nui loa, Spencer Reemelin

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**

Hawaii State 28<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session  
Public Testimony, SB 900, EDN Room 229, 1:15pm  
Wednesday, February 11, 2015

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head.

If you talk to him in his language that goes to his heart.”

*–Nelson Mandela*

I stand in sonorous support of SB900 which establishes the state seal of biliteracy program and appropriates funds for the implementation of the program. This bill in essence support several language proficiency project in Hawaii and nationally the USA Critical Language Shortage, Hawaii Language Roadmap, Office of Language Access, World Language Standards Hawaii Board of Education, & National Language Service Corp just to mention a few. These will lead our student to the 21<sup>st</sup> century language competitiveness.

Let me tell you a story that my obachan once told me. Once there was a mother cat. Now you have heard of the "tiger mother", well she was the quenticential "neeko mom". American cats say Meow, Meow, Meow, She wanted acachan neekoto be educated. Japanese cats say Neeow, Neeoow, Neeow. So just before dawn she nudges her kittie so wake them up so they could be grooming and fed ready for school. " Wake up my dear kittie time is a wasting". " We have a long journey to school and we can't be late." They left their home and began walking down a dusty road. They walked and walked until they came upon a bridge" Known by everyone as Oake Bridge. Mother Neeko stepped slowly on to the bridge it began to creek. Then all of a sudden a big monster Inu came out from under the bridge. This Inu dripped salavia from it's mouth. The kitties began to shake in fright. Mother Neeko simply smiled and said RougggggghRoughhhhhRoughh. When the monster Inu heard this he turned around and went back under the bridge. Mother Neeko sighed a sigh of relief and told her kitties, "See its always best to speak a second language"!

Respectfully submitted

PM Azinga