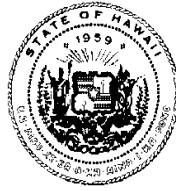




SB 962

Measure Title:	RELATING TO INTERPRETER REFERRAL SERVICES.
Report Title:	Interpreter Referral Services; Appropriation (\$)
Description:	Makes an appropriation to the department of human services for an interpreter referral service for public and private entities serving individuals who are not participants of the department of human services' vocational rehabilitation program.
Companion:	
Package:	Deaf and Blind Task Force
Current Referral:	HSH, WAM
Introducer(s):	CHUN OAKLAND



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 11, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing

The Honorable Josh Green, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 962 - INTERPRETER REFERRAL SERVICES**

Hearing: Thursday, February 12, 2015, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services to operate an interpreter referral service for the deaf and hard of hearing community.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) supports the intent and purpose of S.B. 962, provided that passage of the measure does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget. However, the DVR provides the following comments.

The DVR has provided interpreter referral services for the community for approximately thirty years via a request for proposal. Currently, the referral service is completely state funded with funds from the DVR base budget. However, using funds from the DVR base budget to provide the larger community service, has the negative effect of reducing the overall amount of funds available for the disabled population that uses DVR services. This is the consequence because the state funds used for the interpreter service are no longer available as part of the

state's match towards federal matching funds. It is difficult for the DHS to continue this larger community service; ideally it would be more appropriate to have specific funding to continue to provide the service to non-vocational rehabilitation related requests. Currently, the DVR uses approximately \$80,000 of general funds for these contracted services; the current vendor estimates that in the future the program will cost at least \$90,000. However, while a more expansive interpreter service continues to be a long term goal of the DVR, the expansion of this service at this time is not within the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit our support and testimony to this Committee.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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

February 12, 2015

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

Senate Bill 962 - Relating to Interpreter Referral Services

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) is a statewide Governor-appointed Board with a majority of its members being persons with disabilities or family members. The Board's mission is to advocate and promote full inclusion, independence, equal access, and quality of life for persons with disabilities in society. This testimony represents a position voted upon by the Legislative Committee of the Board.

DCAB supports Senate Bill 962 that makes an appropriation to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for an American Sign Language interpreter referral service for public and private entities serving individuals who are not participants of the DHS, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

Currently, the DHS, DVR contracts for an interpreter referral service using general funds of \$80,000 per year for each year of the biennium. The services statewide are contracted out to a private agency to provide these services for deaf and hard of hearing participants, both DVR and non-DVR participants. DCAB notes that the interpreter referral contract underwrites the cost of finding and placing an interpreter, not the hourly cost of the interpreter's services. This cost is borne by the agency requesting the interpreter. DVR has estimated that approximately half of the total number of people served annually are DVR participants. DVR's mandate is to assist people with disabilities find and maintain employment; therefore, it is going beyond federal requirements by using DVR funds to pay for non-DVR client services. The appropriation being requested in this bill is to continue to offer the whole community interpreter referral services, and allow DVR to use federal matching funds to offer DVR participants other needed services.

DCAB defers to the Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation regarding the amount of funding needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG
Chairperson
Legislative Committee

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director



SB 962
RELATING TO INTERPRETER REFERRAL SERVICES
Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing
Public Hearing - February 12, 2015
2:00 pm, State Capitol, Conference Room 016

By
Tamar Lani, MBA, CI, CT, NIC, SC:L
Susan Kroe-Unabia, CI, CT

Aloha,

Our names are Tamar Lani and Susan Kroe-Unabia. We are co-owners of Isle Interpret, LLC. We are writing in support of SB 962 Relating to Interpreter Referral Services.

Isle Interpret is asking the state legislature to make an appropriation of \$45,000 to the department of human services for interpreter referral service for public and private entities serving individuals who are not participants of the department of human services' vocational rehabilitation program.

This is a valued and needed service for Hawaii's Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf Blind communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Mahalo,

Tamar Lani, MBA, CI, CT, NIC, SC:L
President

Susan Kroe-Unabia, CI, CT
Vice-President

ART FRANK
84-718 FARRINGTON HWY
WAIANE, HI 96792-1906

SENATE BILL 962 RELATING TO INTERPRETER REFERRAL SERVICE

My name is Art Frank and I am from Makaha on the Waianae Coast. I have been deaf for thirty seven years. I support SB 962 because I utilize the services of SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS, CAPTIONERS AND CART. I am no longer a client of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation so this bill is important to me because without the funding necessary consumers like myself will not be able to request the necessary support we need to participate in the process of government, etc. If this happens I will have to file a lawsuit against whoever denies me my right to participate in the process of government because they do not have the necessary funding to provide me a sign language interpreter, captioner or cart. The bottom line, this committee, this legislature has no choice but to fund this bill or they will not be complying with the AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) which means the government can be sued because a lack of funding is no excuse not to comply with ADA. I'm no expert so I cannot tell you specifically what part of ADA protects my rights, but I'm certain the Discrimination Communications Access Board (DCAB) of the Dept. of Health can. Thank you very much

ART FRANK
DEAF CONSUMER

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HSH Testimony](#)
Cc: kuliange1569@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB962 on Feb 12, 2015 14:00PM
Date: Saturday, February 07, 2015 7:36:37 AM
Attachments: [SB962 \(1\) Interpreter Services.pdf](#)

SB962

Submitted on: 2/7/2015

Testimony for HSH on Feb 12, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Francine Mae Aona Kenyon	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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov