



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 322
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

April 19, 2018

To: The Honorable Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
The Honorable Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations

From: Aphirak Bamrungruan, Executive Director

Subject: **HCR 108, HD1** – Urging the State to address the lack of language support in services, programs, and activities offered by state government for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

Hearing: Friday, April 20, 2018, 11:00 AM
Conference Room 414, State Capitol

The Office of Language Access (OLA) supports the intent of the House Concurrent Resolution 108 which urges the State to address the lack of language support in services, programs, and activities offered by state government for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

The mission of OLA is to address the language access needs of Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons and ensure their meaningful access to services, programs, and activities offered by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government, including departments, offices, commissions, boards, and other state-funded agencies. OLA provides oversight, central coordination, and technical assistance to state agencies in their implementation of language access obligations – a civil right under both state and federal law.

Hawaii is one of the most culturally diverse states and has one of the highest proportions of non-English speakers in the nation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, the total population in the State of Hawaii was 1,413,673. An estimate of 25.7% or 339,539 of Hawaii residents, 5 years and older, speak a language other than English at home. Of those, 166,949 or 12.6% indicated that they speak English “less than very well.”

English proficiency (or lack of) has strong impacts on people's economic and social activities, health literacy and wellness, access to education, employment, and important public assistance, benefits, programs and services. Biliteracy and multilingualism are becoming increasingly important aspects of our work force. A multilingual workforce that is knowledgeable about other cultures and can communicate in other languages is vital for our economic growth as well as the wellbeing of our diverse population.

OLA appreciates this committee for its commitment to language access and for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



Testimony in support of HCR108 hd1 URGING THE STATE TO ADDRESS THE LACK OF LANGUAGE SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY
Submitted by Faye Kennedy, chair

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Ruderman and members of the committee

I am honored to express strong and positive support for HCR 108 hd1 urging the state to support needed language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency.

Our multicultural state has a long tradition of appreciating the contributions of immigrants. We support inclusion and equal access of all people, including persons who have limited English proficiency. In addition, our state and our nation needs an educated workforce that will benefit from the appreciation and training in English and other languages.

Many thanks for your continuing support of equity and diversity. I respectfully urge you to support this resolution.

HCR-108-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/19/2018 2:59:56 AM

Testimony for GVO on 4/20/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair; the Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Government Operations:

Good morning. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **HCR108 HD1** which urges the State to address the lack of language support in services, programs, and activities offered by State Government for persons with limited English proficiency.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of **HCR108 HD1** and supports its passage.

HCR108 HD1 is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it urges the State to address the lack of language support in services, programs, and activities offered by State government for persons with limited English proficiency.

The DPH Platform states that "We believe that our nation should have a fair immigration policy that recognizes the diversity of our country and the contribution that immigrants make and have made in the sciences, arts, and culture.

We oppose racial profiling and encourage policies that avoid the militarization of our borders and deplore policies that would deny education and health and human services to immigrant children. We need to ensure that immigrant children, whether their parents are documented or undocumented, are treated with fairness and respect in our schools and in our healthcare system." (Platform of the DPH, P.5, Lines 225-226, 233236 (2016)).

We believe that all families should have an equal opportunity to build their assets and become self-sufficient, and we support a strong safety net of programs that will afford them the opportunity to do so. We must protect our children, our future, from violence and neglect and provide them with a safe and healthy environment in which to grow and thrive. (Platform of the DPH, P.4, Lines 184-185 (2016)).

We believe that workers need to be safe and free from any form of discrimination, harassment or abuse in the workplace. We seek legislation that will achieve these goals. (Platform of the DPH, P.3, Lines 131-132 (2016)).

We need to ensure that our students are safe in our schools, free from bullying and discrimination, to include but not limited to, disability, gender bias, weight, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and/or religion. (Platform of the DPH, P.6, Lines 321-323 (2016)).

Given that **HCR108 HD1** urges the State to address the lack of language support in services, programs, and activities offered by the State government for persons with limited English proficiency, it is the position of the OCC on Legislative Priorities to adopt this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.
Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja
Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee
Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com, Text/Tel.: (808) 258-8889

Senate Committee on Government Operations
Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 309
April 20, 2018, 11am

Testimony in Strong Support of
HCR 108, hd1 RELATING TO LACK OF LANGUAGE SUPPORT

Submitted by Amy Agbayani, Chair
Filipina Advocacy Network (FAN)
3432 B-1 Kalihi St.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Ruderman and members of the committee.

Filipina Advocacy Network (FAN) strongly supports HCR 108/ HR 96 "URGING THE STATE TO ADDRESS THE LACK OF LANGUAGE SUPPORT IN SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OFFERED BY STATE GOVERNMENT FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY." This resolution is consistent with FAN's efforts to improve the status of Filipinos in Hawai'i. FAN is committed to equal rights and non-discrimination, diversity and inclusion of all persons in our multicultural state. This resolution is an important recognition of the rich historical and current linguistic diversity of the state's population. Our language diversity should be used as a resource in both the private and government sectors. This resolution provides excellent information about our state's support of all its residents, including the needs of our immigrant community, contributions of our multilingual workforce.

FAN sees this resolution as a recommitment to implementing civil rights laws on equal access and non-discrimination as well as improving relationships and services in our community and strengthening our economy. I respectfully request you approve this resolution

Ryan H. Engle
Board President

Angela Kuo Min
Executive Director



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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 108
RELATING TO LANGUAGE SUPPORT**

**Committee on Committee on Government Operations
Friday, April 20, 2018 11:00 a.m.
Conference Room 414**

**CHAIR DONNA MERCADO KIM, VICE CHAIR RUSSELL E. RUDERMAN, AND
MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:**

Volunteer Legal Services Hawaii supports HCR 108 in urging the state to address the lack of language support in services, programs, and activities offered by state government for persons with limited English proficiency.

In the last thirty-six years, Volunteer Legal Services Hawaii has provided legal assistance to the low- and moderate- income community of Hawaii; many who identify themselves as English not being their first language and/or being limited in English proficiency. Our office recognizes the needs for multilingual employees to continue serving the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural community of Hawaii, and to provide all residents of Hawaii meaningful access to justice.

I support HCR 108. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

Angela Kuo Min
Executive Director



Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President, Charlene Cuaresma, Vice President
c/o 728 Nunu St., Kailua, HI 96734

Testimony in Strong Support of HCR 108 HD1 Senate Committee on Government Operations April 20, 2018, 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 414

To: Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair and Sen. Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations

From: Jake Manegdeg, President and Charlene Cuaresma, Vice President
Filipino American Citizens League

Report Title: URGING THE STATE TO ADDRESS THE LACK OF LANGUAGE SUPPORT IN SERVICES,
PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES OFFERED BY STATE GOVERNMENT FOR PERSONS
WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

Filipino American Citizens League President Jake Manegdeg and I are proud to strongly support this measure. The League was formed nearly twenty 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.

HCR 108 HD1 is vital for the ability of our government agencies to assure equal access and non-discrimination of state-funded programs and services that are not only essential for people's survival today, but also for their ability to fully participate in, and contribute significantly to, society's daily economic transactions. See the attached American Immigration Council report. It shows when immigrants, whose first language is not English, do well and are civically engaged in their daily lives, our society does well.

Thank you very much for hearing this resolution and for your consideration of its merit for passage and enactment.

Very Sincerely,

Jake Manegdeg and Charlene Cuaresma

May 2015

NEW AMERICANS IN HAWAII:

The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Asians, and Latinos in the Aloha State

Immigrants, Asians, and Latinos account for growing shares of the economy and electorate in Hawaii. Over 1 in 6 residents of Hawaii are immigrants (foreign-born), and more than half of them are naturalized U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote. “New Americans”—immigrants and the children of immigrants—account for 18.1% of registered voters in the state. Immigrants are not only integral to the state’s economy as workers, but also account for billions of dollars in tax revenue and consumer purchasing power. Moreover, Latinos and Asians (both foreign-born and native-born) wield \$31.9 billion in consumer purchasing power, and the businesses they own had sales and receipts of \$18.9 billion and employed nearly 116,000 people at last count. Immigrant, Latino, and Asian workers, consumers, and entrepreneurs are integral to Hawaii’s economy and tax base—and they are an electoral force with which every politician must reckon.

Immigrants and their children are growing shares of Hawaii’s population and electorate.

▪ **The foreign-born share** of Hawaii’s population rose from 14.7% in 1990, 2000, 2013, 2013.¹ to 17.5% in ² to 17.6% in ³ according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Hawaii was home to 246,464 immigrants in 2013.⁴

▪ **56.7% of immigrants (or 139,732 people) in Hawaii were naturalized U.S. citizens in 2013⁵**—meaning that they are eligible to vote.

▪ Unauthorized immigrants comprised roughly **2.4% of the state’s population** (or 35,000 workers) in 2013, according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.⁶

▪ **18.1% (or 99,209) of registered voters** in Hawaii were “New Americans”—naturalized citizens or the U.S.-born children of immigrants who were raised during the current era of immigration from Latin America and Asia which began in 1965—according to an analysis of 2012 Census Bureau data by the American Immigration Council.⁷

Nearly half of all residents of Hawaii are Asian or Latino.

▪ The **Asian share of Hawaii’s population** was 37.8% (or 531,218 people) in 2013.⁸ The **Latino share of the population** grew from 7.4% in 1990 to 9.8% (or 138,064 people) in 2013,¹⁰ according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

▪ **Asians accounted for 41.9% (or 201,000) of Hawaii voters** in the 2012 elections, and **Latinos 5.2% (or 25,000)**, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.¹¹

▪ In Hawaii, **88% of children with immigrant parents were U.S. citizens** in 2009, according to data from the Urban Institute.¹²

- In 2009, **94.7% of children in Asian families** in Hawaii were U.S. citizens, as were **98.9% of children in Latino families**.¹³

Immigrant, Asian, and Latino entrepreneurs and consumers add tens of billions of dollars and tens of thousands of jobs to Hawaii's economy.

- **The 2014 purchasing power of Asians in Hawaii totaled \$28 billion**—an increase of 129.3% since 1990. **Latino buying power totaled \$3.9 billion**—an increase of 308% since 1990, according to the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia.¹⁴
- Immigration boosts housing values in communities. From 2000 to 2010, according to the Americas Society/Council of the Americas, the value added by immigration to the price of the average home was \$1,728 in Honolulu.¹⁵
- Hawaii's 56,872 **Asian-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$18.2 billion and employed 111,924 people** in 2007, the last year for which data is available. **Latino-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$671.7 million and employed 3,977 people** in 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.¹⁶ The state's 4,374 **Latino-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$671.7 million and employed 3,977 people** in 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.¹⁷
- From 2006 to 2010, there were 15,997 new immigrant business owners in Hawaii, and they had total net business income of \$772 million, which makes up 19.8% of all net business income in the state, according to Robert Fairlie of the University of California, Santa Cruz.¹⁸
- In 2010, 22.5% of all business owners in Hawaii were foreign-born, according to the Fiscal Policy Institute.¹⁹

Immigrants are essential to Hawaii's economy as workers and taxpayers.

- Immigrants comprised **20.5% of the state's workforce** in 2013 (or 150,209 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.²⁰
- Latinos in Hawaii paid **\$468 million in federal taxes and \$259 million in state/local taxes in 2013**, according to the Partnership for a New American Economy. In particular, foreign-born Latinos paid \$88 million in federal taxes and \$47 million in state/local taxes.²¹
- The federal tax contribution of Hawaii's Latino population included **\$324 million to Social Security and \$76 million to Medicare in 2013**. Foreign-born Latinos contributed \$59 million to Social Security and \$14 million to Medicare that year.²²

Unauthorized immigrants are important to Hawaii's economy as workers and consumers.

- Unauthorized immigrants comprised roughly **3.7% of the state's workforce** (or 25,000 workers) in 2012, according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.²³
 - If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Hawaii, **the state would lose \$2 billion in economic activity, \$900.3 million in gross state product, and approximately 8,460 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the Perryman Group.²⁴
- Unauthorized immigrants pay taxes.*
- Unauthorized immigrants in Hawaii paid **\$31.2 million** in state and local taxes in 2012, including \$19.8 million in sales taxes, \$6.3 million in personal income taxes, and \$5 million in

property taxes, according to data from the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy.²⁵

- Were unauthorized immigrants in Hawaii to have legal status, they would pay **\$41.2 million** in state and local taxes, including \$21.8 million in sales taxes, \$13.8 million in personal income taxes, and \$5.5 million in property taxes.²⁶

Immigrants are integral to Hawaii's economy as students.

- Hawaii's 4,388 **foreign students contributed \$107.1 million** to the state's economy in tuition, fees, and living expenses for the 2013-2014 academic year, according to NAFSA: Association of International Educators.²⁷
- Foreign students contribute to Hawaii's metropolitan areas. From 2008 to 2012, according to the Brookings Institution, 5,723 foreign students paid \$77.3 million in tuition and \$60.9 million in living costs in the Honolulu metropolitan area.²⁸
- Foreign students also contribute to innovation in Hawaii. In 2009, "non-resident aliens" comprised 27.7% of master's degrees and 42.9% of doctorate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, according to the Partnership for a New American Economy.²⁹

Naturalized citizens advance educationally.

- The number of immigrants in Hawaii with a college degree **increased by 24.1%** between 2000 and 2011, according to data from the Migration Policy Institute.³⁰
- In Hawaii, **86% of children with immigrant parents** were considered "English proficient" as of 2009, according to data from the Urban Institute.³¹
- The English proficiency rate among **Asian children in Hawaii was 93.4%**, while for **Latino children it was 96.3%**, as of 2009.³²

- 1 U.S. Census Bureau, *The Foreign-Born Population: 2000*, December 2003.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 2013 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Jeffrey S. Passel, D’Vera Cohn, and Molly Rohal, *Unauthorized Immigrant Totals Rise in 7 States, Fall in 14* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project, November 18, 2014), p. 29.
- 7 Walter A. Ewing and Guillermo Cantor, *New Americans in the Voting Booth: The Growing Electoral Power of Immigrant Communities* (Washington, DC: American Immigration Council, October 2014), p. 25.
- 8 2013 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).
- 9 U.S. Census Bureau, *The Hispanic Population: 2000*, May 2001.
- 10 2013 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).
- 11 2012 Current Population Survey, Table 4b. Reported Voting and Registration, by Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin, for States: November 2012.
- 12 The Urban Institute, data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Jeffrey M. Humphreys, *The Multicultural Economy 2014* (Athens, GA: Selig Center for Economic Growth, University of Georgia, 2014), pp. 22, 24.
- 15 Jacob Vigdor, *Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market* (New York, NY: Americas Society/Council of the Americas, 2013).
- 16 U.S. Census Bureau, *Estimates of Business Ownership by Gender, Ethnicity, Race, and Veteran Status: 2007*, June 2011.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Robert W. Fairlie, *Open for Business: How Immigrants are Driving Small Business Creation in the United States* (New York, NY: Partnership for a New American Economy, 2012), p. 32.
- 19 David Dyssegaard Kallick, *Immigrant Small Business Owners: A Significant and Growing Part of the Economy* (New York, NY: Fiscal Policy Institute, 2012), p. 24.
- 20 2013 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).
- 21 Partnership for a New American Economy, *The Power of the Purse: The Contributions of Hispanics to America’s Spending Power and Tax Revenues in 2013* (New York, NY: 2014).
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Jeffrey S. Passel, D’Vera Cohn, and Molly Rohal, *Unauthorized Immigrant Totals Rise in 7 States, Fall in 14* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project, November 18, 2014), p. 29.
- 24 The Perryman Group, *An Essential Resource: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Undocumented Workers on Business Activity in the US with Estimated Effects by State and by Industry* (Waco, TX: April 2008), p. 69.
- 25 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *Undocumented Immigrants’ State and Local Tax Contributions* (Washington, DC: April 2015).
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 NAFSA: Association of International Educators, *The Economic Benefits of International Students to the U.S. Economy: Academic Year 2013-2014* (Washington, DC: 2014).
- 28 Neil Ruiz, *The Geography of Foreign Students in U.S. Higher Education: Origins and Destinations* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2014).
- 29 Partnership for a New American Economy, *Help Wanted: The Role of Foreign Workers in the Innovation Economy* (New York, NY: 2013), p. 21.
- 30 Migration Policy Institute Data Hub, Hawaii: Language & Education.
- 31 The Urban Institute, data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.
- 32 Ibid.

HCR-108-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/18/2018 7:04:30 PM

Testimony for GVO on 4/20/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dominic Inocelda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Honorable Chair Donna Kim and members of the Committee on Government Operations:

I would like to express my full support for HCR 108 HD1, Urging the State to Address the lack of Language support in services, programs, and activities offered by State government for persons with limited English proficiency.

I have spent most of my social work career working with the immigrant and limited or non-English speaking population and have come to value the differences of culture and languages of the many groups that have arrived in Hawaii. Yes, I am in agreement that English is our common language that we all should work towards attaining as it provides a means of maintaining the ability to make a living, raising a family, and generally participating in the life of our community. However, although this is a reasonable goal for newcomers from all over the Pacific and Asian basin, the difficulty of learning and proficiently using English has a learning curve that takes a varied amount of time and access to educational opportunity.. For some of the immigrant population and for that matter, some of those persons from older generations of immigrants who are not able to use higher levels of English proficiency, the need for assistance to communicate and ensure that people understand what is expected of them as well as their ability to understand and act on their responsibilities as members of the community is a vital part of the common good of all that live in Hawaii.

One of my interests is trying to learn other languages as a way of learning how others see and experience the world. Languages have their own interesting ways of expressing meaning of relationships, important values of their culture, and ways of living that can add greatly to our English speaking world view. In trying to learn other languages, I personally know that the task is much easier said than done. As I reflect on the difficulties of learning another language, I have gained an understanding of the difficulty that limited or non-English speakers face as they strive towards learning English. I have come to a deep appreciation of the willingness and at times forced learning situations that immigrant persons face as they make a new life here in Hawaii and the United States.

For these reasons, I ask for your support for the passage of HCR 108 as a means of focusing on the continuing work and effort needed to address improved communication

for all members of our community. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Dominic Inocelda

To: House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Brian Kim

Re: HCR 108, SUPPORT

I would like to express my support for HCR 108. Supporting those who are less proficient in English has benefits for all those concerned. These people can feel more comfortable participating in society which in turn allows the government to better understand their needs and legislate accordingly.

This legislation helps mitigate two risks, safety and visibility. Safety is improved as people who are less proficient in English will be better able to understand warnings, rules, and regulations. This includes physical safety (ex. weather alerts) and economic safety (ex. workplace rights).

With increased safety, the barrier to participate in education and recreational programs is reduced. These people can feel more comfortable in society and less anxious about their English proficiency. The end result is a more informed and engaged population which in turn leads to an improved society.

An able government should watch out for its people including those who may lack proficient in English. I believe that when government makes efforts to improve communication, people will be more willing to communicate back which will lead to a more harmonious community. Because of this, I support HCR 108.

Senate Committee on Government Operations
Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 414
April 20, 2018, 11:00am

Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Sen. Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Government Operations

Dina R. Yoshimi
98-2051 Kaahumanu Street
Aiea, HI 96701

April 19, 2018

In support of HCR 108, HD1 (HSCR1773-18)

I am Dina Rudolph Yoshimi, a faculty member of the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures at the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa (UHM) for the past 26 years, and Director of the Hawai'i Language Roadmap Initiative (housed in the College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature at UHM) since September 2013. Today I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in support of HCR 108, HD1 (HSCR1773-18).

In my role as a language professional, as well as someone with extensive experience living overseas, and as a long-time resident of this state, where opportunities to speak with residents and visitors alike in languages other than English are quite common, I am well aware of the urgent need for proficient speakers of languages in addition to English across virtually all sectors of the state workforce. I am not alone in this appreciation: In 2014, a bipartisan group of members of the U.S. Congress, including our own Senator Brian Schatz, commissioned a study on the language needs of our country. They provided the following rationale for the study:

“We write to request that the American Academy undertake a new study...to examine the nation’s current capacity in languages, how a greater attention to language training can improve the education of the citizenry prepared to thrive in a multicultural society and a global economy, and how such preparation influences international cooperation and diplomacy, trade and foreign investment, national security, and the ability of all Americans to enjoy a rich and meaningful life.”

The Congressional group’s commissioning letter goes on to state:

“English is no longer sufficient as a *lingua franca* – neither at home nor abroad. The percentage of the world’s population that speaks English as a first language is declining rapidly; if current demographic trends continue, only 5% will be native English speakers by 2050. At the same time, the ability to communicate in languages other than English has never been more important...”

The commissioned study was conducted by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and published in spring of 2017 under the title *America’s Languages: Investing in Language*

Education for the 21st Century. Among the Key Findings of the comprehensive report, the following were noted (and I quote):

- The ability to understand, speak, read, and write in world languages, in addition to English, is critical to success in business, research, and international relations in the twenty-first century.
- The United States needs more people to speak languages other than English in order to provide social and legal services for a changing population.
- The study of a second language has been linked to improved learning outcomes in other subjects, enhanced cognitive ability, and the development of empathy and effective interpretive skills...
- The United States lags behind most nations of the world, including European nations and China, in the percentage of its citizens who have some knowledge of a second language.

The report's Key Recommendations focused on capacity building for language learning, as well as language maintenance for those who already speak an additional language. The unique contribution that heritage learners (those who speak a language other than English in the home) can make was highlighted. This is an area of strength for Hawai'i that has been severely neglected.

In sum, there is much work to be done in enhancing the state's capacity to draw on the considerable multilingual talent among our residents, and to enhance opportunities for developing language proficiency among public school students and public workers alike. From the classroom to the courts, from hospital corridors to housing services, and from jet-ways to hiking trails, there is not a workplace in the state that does not require the presence of employees who can extend a warm greeting and a clear explanation of legal guidelines, safety regulations, or application procedures in the language spoken by the resident or visitor with limited English proficiency. Yet, with rare exception, state agencies do not hire for qualified bilinguals, nor is there any established state protocol for such individuals to use their bilingual skills when they are needed for providing equitable access to state services.

Without a mandate for valuing bilingual workers, an expansion of job criteria for language-critical positions, and mechanisms for training and hiring those who are best able to increase access to services, we will continue to fail in our commitment to show aloha to those in need of language assistance. This resolution is the first small step in recognizing that we fail to serve with aloha when we fail to provide language access. I strongly urge you to adopt this resolution and use it as a springboard for further legislative action to remove the impediments that prevent the State of Hawai'i from fulfilling its responsibilities to those residents and visitors with limited English proficiency.

I thank you for your service to the State, and to all the people of Hawai'i, and for this opportunity to testify.

Senate Committee on Government Operations
Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 414
April 20, 2018, 11:00am

To: Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair; Sen. Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Government Operations

From: Graham Crookes, Professor, University of Hawai'i (in private capacity)

Subject: Support for HCR 108, URGING THE STATE TO ADDRESS THE LACK OF LANGUAGE SUPPORT IN SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES OFFERED BY STATE GOVERNMENT FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

I am a professor at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, with 30 years of experience working with speakers of Limited English Proficiency (and their teachers) in Hawai'i. **I support HCR 108.**

The State of Hawai'i has one of the highest proportions of multilinguals in the USA. These individuals are already competent in more languages than the average US citizen, and have considerable potential to the Hawai'i workforce, which needs multilingual workers. However, they also need support to develop their English abilities, to be maximally useful to the State, as employees and as employers, and as citizens actively participating in our democracy.

They also have civil rights that must be respected and where they have legitimate needs that the State must support, the fact that they have limited English will need to be addressed by the State. That is why we have the Office of Language Access (among other matters), but it remains inadequately funded with unfilled positions.

At the educational level, the State has one of the largest proportions of keiki with limited English proficiency. Yet there are insufficient teachers (in the public schools) with certification and licensure in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Despite recent improvements (signaled by the two new Hawai'i Board of Education language policies: [the Seal of Biliteracy](#) 2015, Policy 105.15) and [Multilingualism for Equitable Education](#) 2016, Policy 105.14), at least because of the lack in previously available Federal funds for oversight positions, and because of the lack of development of bilingual programs, overall the State is not in a good position to provide adequate educational support to students with Limited English Proficiency.

A range of actions are suggested by this Resolution and I support this broad approach to a significant problem the State faces, which will become more acute in the coming years.