

HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 411 HONOLULU, HI 96813 · PHONE: 586-8636 FAX: 586-8655 TDD: 568-8692

February 23, 2018
Rm. 211, 11:00 a.m.

To: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Linda Hamilton Krieger, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

S.B. No. 2511, S.D. 1

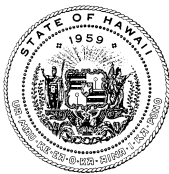
The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over Hawai‘i’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state-funded services. The HCRC carries out the Hawai‘i constitutional mandate that no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights. Art. I, Sec. 5. The HCRC is also an ex-officio member of the Language Access Advisory Council for the Office of Language Access (OLA).

The HCRC supports S.B. No. 2511, S.D.1, which provides for establishment of two permanent full-time positions in OLA, with an appropriation to fund those new positions. The HCRC supports this measure, provided that its passage does not impact the priorities detailed in the Governor’s Executive Budget.

Language is a characteristic of national origin and ancestry. Denial of access to federal and state-funded services for LEP individuals is unlawful national origin / ancestry discrimination, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and H.R.S. Chapter 321C.

OLA is responsible for oversight, central coordination, and technical assistance to state agencies in implementation of language access requirements. To date, OLA’s primary work has been in lending technical assistance to covered entities in developing language access plans required by law, and planning and organizing annual conferences on language access. In this work, OLA’s capacity has been severely limited by under-staffing.

S.B. No. 2511, S.D. 1 expands OLA's capacity by establishing two new positions in OLA, with an appropriation. The HCRC supports this measure, provided that its passage does not impact the priorities detailed in the Governor's Executive Budget.



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

February 21, 2018

To: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Aphirak Bamrungruan, Executive Director

Subject: **SB 2511, SD1 – RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS**

Hearing: Friday, February 23, 2018, 11:00 AM
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

Agency's Position: The Office of Language Access (OLA) supports the intent of the measure, provided that the measure's passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities in the Governor's Executive Budget Request.

Purpose and Justification: The purpose of the measure is to appropriate funds for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (2.00 FTE) permanent program specialist positions within the Office of Language Access to assist state agencies and state-funded agencies in implementing the requirements of Hawaii's language access 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. In 2006, the Hawaii State Legislature passed the Hawaii Language Access Law (Codified under Hawaii Revised Statutes 321C) and OLA was established in 2007 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, or other state-funded agencies (including the counties). In 2013, Act 217, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, gave OLA further responsibilities to establish and operate a Language Access Resource Center.

Under the Hawaii Language Access Law, OLA's task is to provide highly specialized technical assistance and to coordinate resources to reduce the burden of implementing language access obligations. OLA is charged with providing oversight, central coordination, and technical assistance to all state and state-funded agencies in their implementation of language access compliance – a civil right under both state and federal law.

OLA began with six positions but lost five positions in 2009 due to the Reduction-In-Force. In 2012, OLA received enough funds to restore two of the five lost positions and has been operating with only three authorized full-time equivalent positions until the present time. The lack of personnel has limited OLA's ability to fully perform its mandated functions. Additional staffing will enable OLA to better assist state agencies in complying with language access laws and performing its statutorily mandated compliance and technical assistance functions.

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

Filipino American Citizens League

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

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2511 SD1
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Feb. 23, 2018, 11 a.m., Conference Room 211

To: Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair and Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Report Title: Office of Language Access; Program Specialist Positions; Appropriation (\$)
Description: Appropriates funds for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (2.00 FTE) permanent program specialist positions within the office of language access to assist state agencies and state-funded agencies in implementing the requirements of Hawaii's language access law.

Filipino American Citizens League President Jake Manegdeg and I are proud to strongly support this bill. 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.

Funding of two FTE positions for the Office of Language Access 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, our society does well. In other words, the prudent compliance monitoring, planning, coordination, and management expertise that the Office of Language Access can offer our state agencies translates into mutually beneficial public health and economic vitality for all of Hawai'i's communities.

Clearly, adequate staff positions to implement the provisions of Act 217 of the language access law are more cost effective than the cost of litigation for non-compliance of civil rights laws due to the failure to hire staff for the language access resource center.

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

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.



Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211
February 23, 2018, 11:00 am

To: Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, and Senate Ways and Means Committee Members

From: Hawai'i TESOL

Subject: Support for SB2511, RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS

Hawai'i TESOL is the largest state-wide organization representing teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) – commonly referred to as “ESL teachers” – the majority of whom work directly with immigrant students in Hawai'i's DOE schools to support English language development. **We support SB2511, which appropriates funds for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (2.00 FTE) permanent program specialist positions within the office of language access to assist state agencies and state-funded agencies in implementing the requirements of Hawaii's language access law.**

About 1 in 4 of Hawai'i residents speaks a language other than English at home, and about 1 in 8 has reported to speak English “less than very well”. In 2006, the Hawai'i State Legislature passed the Hawai'i Language Access Law, which established the Office of Language Access (OLA) to ensure that Hawai'i residents who are not proficient in English are not denied access to essential government services, programs, and activities. This is an especially important issue for many of our state's public school immigrant students whose parents and primary caregivers speak a language other than English.

SB 2511 would renew our state's commitment to the Language Access Law by adding two full-time permanent positions so that the office can successfully carry out its statutory functions. Hawai'i TESOL supports this bill, which seeks to increase the current number of staff at OLA. Funding of these two additional positions will support OLA in carrying out the Hawai'i's Language Access law and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by ensuring that the parents and primary caregivers of immigrant children in DOE schools get important school-related information in their home languages.

We hope that the legislature continues to recognize the importance of language access for our state's immigrant families and will consider funding these positions to help OLA carry out its mission.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,
Shawn Ford
Socio-political Action Representative
Hawai'i TESOL



SB-2511-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 6:20:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Testifying for Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2511 RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS
SUBMITTED BY AMY AGBAYANI, CHAIR FILIPINA ADVOCACY NETWORK (FAN)

Chair dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith Agaran and members of the committee.

Filipina Advocacy Network (FAN) strongly supports SB2511 sd1 providing two positions for the Office of Language Access. The Hawai'i State Legislature passed legislation establishing the Office of Language access to ensure access to state-funded services for persons with limited English proficiency. This important agency is under-funded and cannot effectively implement its mandate without additional resources. Language access to state services is a critical government responsibility and a civil right. The Office of Language Access is the state agency that can help other state agencies provide appropriate language assistance that will benefit our community in multiple ways. Non-discrimination, equal access, appreciation of diversity and need for inclusion are the basis for funding OLA.

Obtaining government information and access to state services should be available to all persons in the state. Although not the same, limited English speakers encounter similar problems and need similar programs available to deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Our recent problem with the incorrect missile alert warning highlights the needs of individuals who are unable to read or understand English messages. At this time, there is inadequate communication protocols to warn our multilingual communities of hurricanes and other natural disasters.

“According to the American Community Survey data collected for five years from 2010 to 2014, around one-in-four people aged 5 and older during the period spoke a language other than English at home in Hawaii. Speaking a non-English language at home does not mean that the person cannot speak English. About half of the non-English speakers at home were fluent English speakers describing their English speaking ability as “very well”, while another 30 percent rated their English speaking ability as “well”. However, 19 percent of the non-English speakers in Hawaii, or about 62,000 people, spoke English “not well” or “not at all”. At the household level, 6.3 percent of total households in Hawaii, or about 28,400 households, had no one aged 14 and older who could speak English very well in the household. “
Hawai'i has a significant percentage of people in all counties who are unable or have only a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English. Without language assistance, these residents face barriers to government information and services and unable to fully participate in the economy and community activities.”

A large percentage of persons in Hawai'i do not speak English or have difficulty using English. For example, 40 percent of persons of Vietnamese ethnicity and 35 percent of persons of Chinese ethnicity have either limited ability or are unable to speak English. Among Filipino ethnic groups, 26 percent of Ilocanos are not fluent in English and 15 percent of Pacific Islanders have limited English proficiency.

Non-English language speaking at home was more prevalent in Honolulu County than in the neighbor island counties. The proportion of non-English speakers was highest in Honolulu County at 28 percent and lowest in Hawaii

County at 19 percent. Ilocano, Tagalog, and Japanese were the top three most common non-English languages spoken at home in Hawaii. Speakers of these three languages made up about half of non-English speakers at home in Hawaii.

See these reports for more information on language use in Hawai'i:

http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/economic/reports_studies/non-english-speaking-population-in-hawaii/

http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/Non_English_Speaking_Population_in_Hawaii_April_2016.pdf

Maraming salamat po for your consideration and support to members of our community who need language assistance for state services. OLA needs these two positions to effectively meet its objectives and mandate.



TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: FAYE KENNEDY, CHAIR HF CR

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2511, sd1
RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights supports programs and policies that ensure equal access and support diversity and inclusion in the state. HF CR supports SB 251, sd1 requesting two positions to meet the objectives and mandate of the law that established the state Office of Language Access. HF CR supports OLA's mandate regarding non-discrimination and equal access and equal treatment to government services. Language access is a civil right. Many community members with limited English proficiency face barriers to equal opportunity and access to state services. These barriers to equal opportunity are often related to a person's race, color, ethnicity, or national origin. Limited language access may deny civil rights to many persons in Hawai'i. Although most residents living in Hawai'i read, write, speak, and understand English, a significant percentage in the state are second language learners and have limited English proficiency. To have equal access to state services and full participation in the community, persons who are second language learners and limited English proficiency require language assistance.

HF CR supports SB2511, sd1 as we believe that language access to state services is a civil right and OLA is an important state agency that needs to meet its mandates relating to equal access and non-discrimination.

SB-2511-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 1:37:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rachel L. Kailianu	Testifying for Ho`omana Pono, LLC	Support	Yes

Comments:

Please specify that two Hawaiian speaking personal be added with no substitution with/ for any other languages.

SB-2511-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 10:29:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2511-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 4:06:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2511-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 5:33:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marcella Alohalani Boido	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Language access continues to be spotty in Hawaii. Some government and covered agencies do not have a clear idea of their responsibilities. Some staff are just plain confused. Even people of good will do not fully understand their obligations, nor how to carry them out. Standards continue to be missing or low. Vital documents are not being translated. Please provide the Hawaii State Office on Language Access with the funding and staff it needs to carry out its mission. Language access is an important part of a just society. Thank you.

SB-2511-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 10:53:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Clement C. Bautista	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

The Office of Language Access (OLA) provides an essential function that increases the awareness of and participation in government functions of large segments of Hawaii's community that would otherwise face language barriers. This office provides oversight, central coordination, and technical assistance to state agencies and state-funded entities in the implementation of language access requirements under Hawaii and federal laws, rules, and guidance. It also creates and distributes multilingual materials to help state agencies and covered entities to effectively communicate with Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons, as well as resolving public complaints relating to language access barriers.

Since its inception, the OLA has been severely downsized, which not only negatively impacts the staff and efficiencies of various agencies and departments, but increases rather than decreases the barriers faced by LEP persons in participating in our democracy. I strongly support the increase in funding to support the OLA in staffing and resources which reinforces our commitment to the democratic process.

Thank you,

Clement Bautista
Filipino-American Historical Society of Hawaii, Member