



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
March 21, 2017 at 2:02 p.m.

By
Donald O. Straney
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i at Hilo

SB 560 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Donald Straney, Chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. I support the intent of SB 560 SD1 HD1 to fund the University of Hawai'i to translate the Hawai'i state constitution into the Hawaiian language.

UH Hilo views the proposal as a positive step in the continued revitalization of the Hawaiian language. Our College of Hawaiian Language, Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani has the expertise and capacity to provide translation of the state constitution should SB 560 SD1 HD1 be enacted.

UH Hilo supports this measure on the condition that any requested funds do not supplant any portion of the University's Biennium budget request.

Thank you for your consideration, and the opportunity to provide testimony.



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Niuolahiki
Hawaiian Language Online

House Committee on Higher Education
Rep. Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair

Date: Tuesday, March 21 2017 Time: 2:02 PM Place: Room 309

*Testimony of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Non-Profit Educational Organization
Dedicated to the Revitalization of the Hawaiian Language*

SB 560 SD1 HD1 - RELATING TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE: SUPPORT

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

'O 'Ekekela Aiona ko'u inoa. 'O wau ka Luna Ho'okele o ka 'Aha Pūnana Leo. **Kāko'o** ka 'Aha Pūnana Leo i ka pila SB 560 SD1 HD1. My name is 'Ekekela Aiona, Executive Director of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, submitting testimony in **support** of SB 560 SD1 HD1.

SB 560 SD1 HD1 appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to translate the Hawai'i state constitution into the Hawaiian language. The 'Aha Pūnana Leo is the statewide provider of Hawaiian medium early learning with 13 preschools and 2 infant-toddler programs on Hawai'i, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu and Kaua'i. As our 'Aha Pūnana Leo families begin to experience multigenerational use of the Hawaiian language in their homes, it is necessary that Hawai'i's state government keep in time with the renormalization requirements of an official language. The families of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo appreciate that the principal document declaring Hawaiian as an official language will itself be provided in Hawaiian. Mahalo nui to the University of Hawai'i for its role in this important task.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo appreciates the efforts of the Hawai'i State Legislature on behalf of the Hawaiian language and urge the **support and passage of SB 560 SD1 HD1**.

Mahalo,
'Ekekela Aiona
'Ekekela Aiona
Executive Director, 'Aha Pūnana Leo

E O I a K a 'Ō l e l o H a w a i ' i

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Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
For hearing Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Re: SB560,SD1,HD1
RELATING TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE.
Appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to translate the Hawai'i State
Constitution into the Hawaiian language.

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

The original version of this bill SB560 proposed to appropriate \$25,000.00 for the current fiscal year, and an additional \$25,000 for the following fiscal year, for the University of Hawaii to translate the Hawaii state constitution into the Hawaiian language.

Apparently that \$50,000 was either not enough money, or else the project might be put out to bid in hopes of getting a lower price —

because the number of dollars to be appropriated has been left blank. Also it seems that there is hope that the bidding frenzy among competing translator contractors can be sorted out soon after January 7, 2059. Is it really going to take that long? It would not be surprising, considering how slowly our government bureaucrats work.

Come on, folks, it should not be necessary to appropriate any money to get the State Constitution translated into Hawaiian language.

How many millions of dollars have already been spent to establish programs at the University of Hawaii whose purpose is to produce students who are fluent in Hawaiian language at all levels of expertise from bachelors to doctoral degrees?

Surely the professors of Hawaiian language could find students in their classes who would be capable and willing to do the translation for free. Students might work as individuals in competition with each other to see whose translation is best. Or the translation job might be done as a class project with students working together cooperatively on a portion of the constitution each week until the entire document has been translated.

Similar projects have been done where students translate articles in the Hawaiian language newspapers from the 1800s into English; so why not have students translate the English language state constitution into Hawaiian?

Not every good thing requires an appropriation of taxpayer dollars. Furthermore, if money were actually necessary to do this project, then the first place to look for the money should be the very wealthy OHA or Kamehameha Schools.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2017 8:01 AM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: keiki@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB560 on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM

SB560

Submitted on: 3/20/2017

Testimony for HED on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keiki Kawaiaaea	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This will be of valuable practical use by both the legislature and Hawaiian medium learners.

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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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2017 2:02 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: launahele@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB560 on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM*

SB560

Submitted on: 3/19/2017

Testimony for HED on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2017 4:24 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: kaulanad@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB560 on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM*

SB560

Submitted on: 3/17/2017

Testimony for HED on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kaulana Dameg	Individual	Support	No

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HEDtestimony

From: Brandon Marc Higa <legallybrandon@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2017 2:26 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Subject: Testimony for SB 560, SD1, HD1
Attachments: Testimony - SB 560 SD1, HD1 - Brandon Marc Higa.pdf

Good afternoon House Committee on Higher Education,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for SB560, SD1, HD1. I am submitting testimony in support of this measure as an individual and will not be present at the hearing to testify.

Best regards,
Brandon

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Brandon Marc Higa, M.A.
Student Bar Association President Emeritus (2015-16)
J.D. Candidate, Entering Class of 2015
University of Hawaii at Manoa
William S. Richardson School of Law

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2017 10:54 AM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: hiivuta@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB560 on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM*

SB560

Submitted on: 3/20/2017

Testimony for HED on Mar 21, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hiilei Vuta	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Tuesday, March 21, 2017

TIME: 2:02 pm

PLACE: Conference Room 309

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 560

Appropriates funds to the University of Hawai‘i to translate the Hawai‘i state constitution into the Hawaiian language.

Honorable Chair McKelvey, Vice-Chair Hashem, and members of the committee, my name is Shelley Soong, and am a student and staff member of the University of Hawai‘i. I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 560. This bill would provide adequate resources to translate the Hawai‘i state constitution into the Hawaiian language.

I support this bill for numerous reasons:

- Since 1978, Article 15, Section 4 of the Constitution of the State of Hawai‘i has stated that “English and Hawaiian shall be the official languages of Hawai‘i.” It’s been almost 40 years since Hawaiian has been an official language of Hawai‘i, however, the State of Hawai‘i does not make available government records, papers or documents in the Hawaiian language.
- Since 1978, Article 10, Section 4 of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii has stated that, "The State shall promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history and language." Despite this, the State of Hawaii does not make available opportunities for Hawaiian language speakers to use the language. Official government publications and documents to be available in the Hawaiian language will give the public the opportunity to use the Hawaiian language.
- In 2016 according to the Hawaii State Data Center, **Hawaiian is the #1 language other than English spoken at home in Hawaii County.** In the State of Hawaii as a whole, Hawaiian is among the top 5 languages other than English spoken at home. Hawaiian is spoken by thousands of State of Hawaii residents, and this amount is increasing. More opportunities need to be made to ensure that the language is promoted in the state.
- Over the past 40 years, various educational institutions in the State of Hawaii have not only expanded, but some have reached exceptional international recognition for promoting the Hawaiian language:
 - In 2014, ‘Aha Pūnana Leo (educational organization in Hawaii) was awarded the world’s first accreditation of an early education program conducted through an endangered and indigenous language by the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC). ‘Aha Pūnana Leo continues its success in increasing the number of fluent speakers of the Hawaiian language in the State of Hawaii.

- The Hawaii State Department of Education continues to provide K-12 Hawaiian language education through the public school system.
 - The University of Hawaii (UH) offers successful Hawaiian language programs at all 10 campuses across 4 Hawaiian Islands. This has given State of Hawaii adult residents opportunities to successfully learn the Hawaiian language and become fluent speakers of the language.
 - UH offers bachelor's, masters and doctoral degrees in Hawaiian language. These degree programs have allowed for an increase in the number of individuals with advanced degrees focused on the Hawaiian language.
- The State of Hawaii is investing a vast amount of resources to increase the number of Hawaiian language students and fluent speakers in Hawaii; more needs to be done to ensure that those who acquire and speak the language are not acquiring an impractical skill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by,
Shelley Soong