

HAWAII INTERPRETER ACTION NETWORK

P.O. Box 236024

Honolulu, Hawaii 96823-3519

hawaii.interpreters@gmail.com

To: Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair; Sen. Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair;
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary

Date: March 27, 9:30 a.m., Room 016

Re: **SCR 148, SR 92, SUPPORT**

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Rhoads, and Members of this Committee, thank you for hearing these resolutions. Respectfully, I ask all of you to support these resolutions. The testimony I am submitting on them is identical.

Hawaii Interpreter Action Network, founded in 2002, is a professional association for interpreters and translators.

As healthcare, court, and community interpreters, we are very aware of the presence of the peoples of the Compacts of Free Association in Hawaii. As it happens, I live on a street where one of the blocks is basically a Micronesian neighborhood. I often see women dressed in their beautiful and distinctive skirts, going by with their children.

The situation of these peoples, as I'm sure you know, is that a family member falls ill and must travel here for treatment. Some relatives travel with the person who is ill. Other family members travel over later to help and support the person who is ill, and to share in care giving.

This is a reason for travel that is a bit unusual in the context of American history. Many of the other groups that have traveled or moved here did it for religious, political, or economic reasons. Ill health is a new reason.

Illness lands these folks in the hospitals and clinics of Hawaii, where they often need healthcare interpreters. The combination of some being Limited-English Proficient and the culture shock of being here, also lands some of them in our court system. They also need interpreters in education, social service, and other government settings.

So, there are Micronesian language interpreters—not enough for our needs here, but still quite a few. We enjoy, value, and appreciate these colleagues.

Their schedules are very full. Many of them must take time off from work, not just hours, but days, weeks, and months sometimes, to care for a relative who is sick. Sometimes they fall ill themselves. They need to attend funerals for family and friends with a frequency that is truly

appalling. How they manage to withstand these losses and stresses and still keep on going is amazing.

It is sad to learn that the REAL ID Act of 2005 has not taken the people of the Compacts of Free Association into account.

The situation with the REAL ID Act of 2005 may be a fairly simple thing to remedy. That is considerably unlike the multiple illnesses and other stresses that afflict these populations. Anything we can legally and fairly do to reduce the stress on these residents should be done.

I have reviewed the testimony on HCR 104 and HR 90. HIAN submitted testimony in support of both of these resolutions. The Micronesian Consulate General, COFACAN, HealthyPacific.Net, the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission, and several individuals suggested some additional or supplemental remedies. HIAN agrees with them. We ask you to give careful consideration to those remedies.

Eventually, the children who are born in the US will remember how their parents, relatives, and network were treated. In Hawaii, at least, we know how that can play out. Let us do our best for the most recent group to join us here.

In the spirit of *aloha*, and for the sake of justice, please pass SCR 148 and SR 92. Thank you.



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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

March 27, 2018
Rm. 016, 9:30 a.m.

To: The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

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

Re: S.C.R. No. 142 / S.R. No. 92

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 supports S.C.R. No. 142 / S.R. No. 92, with a suggested amendment.

S.C.R. No. 142 / S.R. No. 92 urges the United States Congress to pass legislation to correct and clarify the status of migrants under the Compact of Free Association (COFA) for the purposes of the Real ID Act of 2005. Enactment of such clarifying legislation would relieve the burden on Hawai‘i residents who are citizens COFA nations, who have an unlimited duration of stay in the United States, from the requirement that they be issued only a one-year driver’s license that has to be renewed annually.

Under the Compacts of Free Association, we have a special relationship with COFA nations and their citizens, one that developed from a historical trust relationship. Citizens of COFA nations may enter into, work, and establish residence in the United States, but do not have a pathway to U.S. citizenship. These COFA citizens who enter and reside in Hawai‘i under a Compact of Free Association do not have limited authorized stays in the United States. They should be able to get driver’s licenses that expire on their first birthday occurring not less than

eight years after the date of issuance, not a shorter duration. This would be fair, helping these COFA Hawai'i residents avoid unnecessary cost and inconvenience.

The HCRC suggests that S.C.R. No. 142 / S.R. No. 92 be amended to add an additional resolution clause, urging the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to consider and implement changes in the Systemic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system, to clarify the status of residents who are COFA citizens, to confirm legal presence and unlimited duration of stay, to the extent that they can exercise their authority and capability to do so under current law.

SR-92

Submitted on: 3/25/2018 4:09:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/27/2018 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

What is there to Qualife if they are eliagal they Have NO rights until they become a US Citizen.

This is what the people want. This is Fair.

Aloha