

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1750

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 15 2021

RE: H.C.R. No. 169

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2021  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts, to which was referred H.C.R. No. 169 entitled:

"HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SERVICES FOR IMMIGRANTS AND INCREASE IMMIGRANT OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE CIVIC AND ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to urge the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to convene a working group to improve access to government services for immigrants and increase immigrant opportunities to make civic and economic contributions to the community.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Office of Community Services; Office of Language Access; Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights; Interagency Council for Immigrant and Refugee Services, Inc.; Ethnic Education Hawai'i; Goodwill Hawaii; Hawaii Foodbank, Inc.; Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights; and three individuals.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's history, with its sugar and pineapple industries being reliant on immigrant laborers from Asia and the Pacific region, is inextricably interlinked with immigration. The immigrant population continues to be crucial for




the State, and according to an April 2018 report titled "Hawaii's Working Population: An Analysis by Industry 2012-2016" issued by the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT), twenty-two percent of Hawaii's working population during the 2012-2016 period were born in foreign countries. According to an April 2016 DBEDT report titled "Non-English Speaking Population in Hawaii", during the 2002-2014 period, 25.3 percent of people in the State aged five years and older spoke a language other than English at home, of which 18.9 percent spoke English "not well" or "not at all." The report found that due to lack of proficiency in English, earnings of non-English speakers were ten to thirty-four percent lower than that of English-only speakers, despite having the same education, experience, race, gender, and similar occupations. The report also noted that language deficiency impedes efficient delivery of public services, and thus, in 2000, a federal executive order was signed to require federal agencies to identify the need for services to those with limited English proficiency (LEP) and develop and implement a system to provide meaningful access to language assistance services.

Your Committee finds that in 1985, the Legislature established the Office of Community Services (OCS) as an agency administratively-attached to the Department of Labor and Industrial Services to assist disadvantaged persons, refugees, and immigrants to overcome workforce barriers to economic self-sufficiency through an array of community-based programs and services. Your Committee notes OCS's testimony regarding its various programs, its progress, and constraints due to budgetary limitations. Your Committee also notes concerns raised in testimony regarding the State's inability to properly serve the LEP communities during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, and repeated citations by the U.S. Department of Justice and federal courts regarding the State's failure to ensure meaningful access to services by LEP persons. Your Committee believes this measure will assist OCS in obtaining the necessary information and input to enable the State's immigrant community better access to government services.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.C.R. No. 169, and recommends its adoption.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Labor, Culture and  
the Arts,



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BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-First Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts**  
**LCA**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <i>HCR 169</i>	Committee Referral: <i>LCA</i>	Date: <i>4/09/2021</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye ✓	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
TANIGUCHI, Brian T. (C)	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley	✓			
KEOHOKALOPE, Jarrett				✓
FEVELLA, Kurt				✓
<b>TOTAL</b>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes