



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
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Legislative Conference Committee Passes Hawaiian Language Mandates

HONOLULU- A Senate and House Conference Committee passed House Bill 1984 Senate Draft 1, Conference Draft 1, requiring the use of the Hawaiian language this morning. The conference draft will now go before the full Senate and House for a floor vote.

The bill designates the month of February as “Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month” to celebrate and encourage the use of Hawaiian language. The measure further requires that all letterheads, documents, symbols, and emblems of the State and other government departments include accurate and appropriate spelling and punctuations of Hawaiian names and language.

In 1978, the Hawaii Constitution was amended to recognize the Hawaiian language as one of the two official languages of the State. Since then, great strides have been made to bring about a renaissance of the Hawaiian language.

“The passage of this bill further codifies the Hawaiian language as one of the official languages of the State,” said Sen. J. Kalani English, who is a member of the Conference Committee that passed this bill.

The Senate has passed similar bills in the past six years, but it has stalled in the House.

“For years we have asked for parity in the appropriate use of Hawaiian language as one of two official languages, I am elated that this measure is moving forward and will soon become law,” said Sen. J. Kalani English, represents District 6, (Hāna, East and Upcountry Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, and Kaho‘olawe). “This is a great day for those of us who carry on the language of our Grandparents’ parents.”

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If the measure is passed by both the Senate and the House and it is signed into law by the Governor, the measure will take affect on January 1, 2013.

To view Sen. J. Kalani English's explanation of the bill:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RI628kGOU90>

(Photo Caption: Senate Conference Committee members discuss House Bill 1984 Senate Draft 1, Conference Draft 1, upon voting on the measure.)

(Photo Courtesy: Senate Communications)

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