

# HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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

Friday February 11, 2022  
Via Videoconference, 2:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 225

To: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
The Honorable Scot Z. Matayoshi., Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

From: Liann Ebesugawa, Chair  
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: H.B. No. 2491, H.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.

H.B. No. 2491, H.D.1, would amend the HRS § 1-13.5 to require all letterheads, documents, symbols, and emblems of the State and other political subdivisions that include Hawaiian words or names to include accurate and appropriate Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation. The bill establishes references for accurate, appropriate, and authentic Hawaiian names and words, including proper Hawaiian spelling and punctuation. It also clarifies that bills and other official documents are not required to be written in Hawaiian and that incorrect Hawaiian words and names shall not invalidate the documents or render them unenforceable and no cause of action shall arise accordingly.

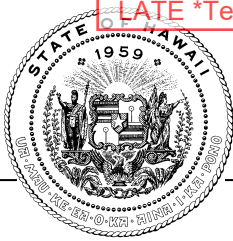
Our State Constitution establishes that both Hawaiian and English are the official languages of the State (State Constitution, Article XV, § 4).

Language is closely tied to culture and identity. Indeed, language rights are specifically recognized and protected in Article 13 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

***Article 13***

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.

It is important and appropriate that the State of Hawai‘i take action to respect and promote the use of the Hawaiian language as required in this bill. **The HCRC supports H.B. No. 2491, H.D.1.**



**LATE** \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF PLANNING  
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846  
Fax: (808) 587-2824  
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Coastal Zone  
Management  
Program

Environmental Review  
Program

Land Use Commission

Land Use Division

Special Plans Branch

State Transit-Oriented  
Development

Statewide Geographic  
Information System

Statewide  
Sustainability Program

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
Director, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
Friday, February 11, 2022  
2:15PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325  
in consideration of  
**HB 2491 HD 1**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE.**

**LATE**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (“OPSD”) appreciates the intent of HB 2491 HD 1, which requires all letterheads, documents, state highway signs, symbols, and emblems of the State and other political subdivisions that include Hawaiian names or words to include consistent Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation, including the use of kahakō and ‘okina. HB 2491 HD 1 also establishes references for consistent Hawaiian names and words, including consistent Hawaiian spelling and punctuation. OPSD offers the following comments.

The Hawai‘i State Board on Geographic Names (“Board”) was established in OPSD by Act 50 of the 1974 Hawai‘i State Legislature. Act 50 (Chapter 4E, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (“HRS”)) states that the purpose of the Board is “... *to assure uniformity in the use and spelling of the names of geographic features within the State.*” The Board is responsible for designating the official names and spellings of geographic features in Hawai‘i.

Furthermore, §4E-3(c), HRS, states that “*the departments of the State shall use or cause to be used on all maps and documents prepared by or for them the names and spellings approved by the board on geographic names; provided that such names or spellings shall not be contrary to legally established names or spellings.*”

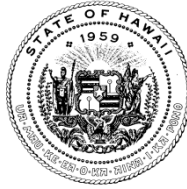
As such, OPSD recommends amending HB 2491 HD 1, §1-13.5 (b) to include consultation with the Board:

"(b) For the purposes of consistency, Hawaiian names and words shall be printed in conformance with:

- (1) "Hawaiian Dictionary: Hawaiian-English, English Hawaiian", by Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, University of Hawai'i Press, copyright 1986;
- (2) "Māmaka Kaiao: A Modern Hawaiian Vocabulary", developed by the Kōmike Hua'ōlelo, the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee;
- (3) "Place Names of Hawaii", by Mary Kawena Pukui, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini, University of Hawai'i Press, copyright 1974, as revised and expanded in 1976;
- (4) Any other commonly used Hawaiian-language dictionary, including dictionaries that account for the unique characteristics of the Ni'ihau dialect and other Hawaiian dialects; [~~or~~]
- (5) Consultations from members of the Hawaiian-speaking language community, including individuals who are fluent in the Ni'ihau dialect and other Hawaiian dialects[~~or~~]; or
- (6) Consultations with the Hawai'i Board on Geographic Names for the names and spellings of geographic features in Hawai'i."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



TESTIMONY BY:

JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors  
ROSS M. HIGASHI  
EDUARDO P. MANGLALLAN  
PATRICK H. MCCAIN  
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

**LATE**

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 11, 2022  
2:15 P.M.  
State Capitol, Teleconference

**H.B. 2491, H.D. 1  
RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE**

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** this measure that seeks to set standards for consistent use of Hawaiian punctuation and spelling in certain documents, letterheads, and highway signage by state and county agencies.

The DOT appreciates the language within H.B. 2491, H.D. 1, to phase in replacement of state highway signs. Based on current sign inventory there are roughly 101,400 signs that may require replacement to conform to the place names printed in the resources identified in Section 3(b). Without the phased approach incorporated in the bill, cost to replace installed signs would be approximately \$101.4 million not including potential structural retrofits needed should the size of the signs change.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies  
46-255 Kahuhipa St. Suite 1205  
Kane'ohe, HI 96744  
(808) 247-7942  
Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D. Executive Director  
e-mail [Ken\\_Conklin@yahoo.com](mailto:Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com)  
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

For hearing Friday, February 11, 2022

Re: HB 2491 HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE.

Requires all letterheads, documents, state highway signs, symbols, and emblems of the State and other political subdivisions that include Hawaiian names or words to include consistent Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation, including the use of kahako and 'okina. Establishes references for consistent Hawaiian names and words, including consistent Hawaiian spelling and punctuation. Requires the governor, lieutenant governor, state legislators, and heads of principal departments to prominently display a Hawaiian language translation of the name of their respective office or department at least once on the main page of their official website and in the letterhead of their stationery. Clarifies that the full text of bills and other official documents are not required to be written in Hawaiian and that inconsistently spelled or punctuated Hawaiian words and names shall not invalidate the documents or render them unenforceable and no cause of action shall arise accordingly. Requires the University of Hawaii to compile a full list of all dialects and other variations in the Hawaiian language currently in use and submit a report of its findings to the legislature. Effective 7/1/2044. (HD1)

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

The Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies is delighted to support both the intent and the actual contents of this bill, which is a vast improvement over previous bills regarding Hawaiian language that were active during numerous recent years.

Hawaiian language is a great treasure for the people of Hawaii and for all the world. It deserves not only to survive but to thrive. It needs to be "normalized" meaning that people should see it written and hear it spoken in the context of everyday life, even if they themselves do not routinely write or speak it themselves. Hopefully people will casually, informally, and gradually "pick up" the vocabulary, sentence patterns, cadence, and metaphors from hearing fluent speakers in the same way as tourists or immigrants acquire the language of the place where they sojourn or take up permanent residence.

This bill correctly states "[D]ue to a myriad of political, economic, and social pressures, the Hawaiian language was materially marginalized, leading to its atrophy and eventual formal and practical exclusion from public and civic spaces."

Previous bills have stated or implied the racially inflammatory falsehood that Hawaiian language was made illegal as a method whereby the evil haoles who overthrew the beloved Queen oppressed the native people and destroyed their culture. This idea is even found in three places in a short subpage on the Department of Education's website, which the administrators refused to correct despite strong evidence disproving it. See

"Was Hawaiian Language Illegal?"

<https://www.angelfire.com/hi2/hawaiiansovereignty/hawlangillegal.html>

"Holding the State of Hawaii Department of Education accountable for propagating the lie that Hawaiian language was banned."

<https://www.angelfire.com/big11a/DOEHawnLangBan.html>

"Examples of Some Angry or Bitter Published Articles Claiming That Ethnic Hawaiians Were Victimized by Having Their Language Made Illegal or Suppressed"

<https://www.angelfire.com/hi2/hawaiiansovereignty/hawlangpublvictclaims.html>

"Hawaiian Language as a Political Weapon"

<https://www.angelfire.com/big09/HawLangPolitWeapon.html>

For more than a century, from about 1850 to about 1980, Hawaiian language continuously declined as a language of everyday usage. The decline accelerated as

King Kalakaua vigorously recruited tens of thousands of Japanese and Chinese to work on the sugar plantations, while the economy and culture (and hence revenues for the government) were increasingly dominated by English-speaking businessmen. Immigrants who chose to make Hawaii their permanent home nearly always chose to learn English rather than Hawaiian for everyday use, because English was far more practical; and native Hawaiian parents began demanding that their children speak English even at home so they could thrive in their own homeland. Two UH "liberal" scholars confirmed that by 1892, while the monarchy still held power, 95% of all the government schools were using English as the language of instruction because that's what parents and government leaders demanded [John Reinecke dissertation 1935 and UH Press book 1969; Albert Schutz, "Voices of Eden", 1994]. Even Queen Lili'uokalani chose English as the language for her speech on opening day of the legislature. Starting around 1980 there has been a growing effort to revive Hawaiian language and pride in Hawaiian culture, including large levels of funding from the federal and state governments. I was a beneficiary of one such program as I spent three years immediately upon immigrating to Hawaii from Boston, taking Hawaiian language courses free of charge at Windward School for Adults night school at Kalaheo High School, 1992-1995 under Kumu Allison Ledward, and continued occasionally thereafter through community, TV and internet programs.

Some sovereignty activists have chosen language revival as one of their major weapons, as illustrated by the hostile, vindictive tone of bills offered in recent years at the Legislature. This present bill, by contrast, displays aloha, reconciliation, cooperation, and practical methods of implementation. Congratulations and appreciation to the author(s)!

This bill generously proposes a very practical way of normalizing Hawaiian language. "Additionally, the intent of this Act is not to require that legislative bills and other official documents be written in Hawaiian as well as English; rather, if documents and letterheads prepared by or for state or county agencies or officials contain Hawaiian names and words, this Act only requires that the Hawaiian names and words be written in a consistent manner." By contrast, bills in previous years demanded that every official document be written in Hawaiian; and that if both language were used then Hawaiian must come ahead of English.

Versions of this bill in previous years demanded that if a law or bill was written in both Hawaiian and English, then any dispute or disagreement over what the bill means must be resolved in favor of the Hawaiian version -- despite that fact that very few



legislators know Hawaiian well enough to comprehend the meaning of the Hawaiian version which they are officially voting upon as taking precedence over the English version which they are basing their vote upon. Such an absurd rule of interpretation would allow all sorts of mischief by bill-authors who could include either straightforward concepts or kaona (double meanings) in the Hawaiian version which would escape the awareness of a legislator relying on the English version. By contrast, this bill explicitly and strongly declares that the English version is the official one: "Whenever there is found to exist any radical and irreconcilable difference between the English and Hawaiian version of any of the laws of the State, the English version shall be held binding. Hawaiian shall not be required for public acts and transactions"

Previous bills also demanded that UH academic-style 'okinas and kahakos must be used, whereas this bill generously resolves the internal dispute between academic Ali'i vs. maka'ainana styles by saying "The legislature recognizes that Hawaiian language practitioners generally employ two written orthographies, namely unmarked language and marked language. The unmarked orthography was the first writing system of Hawaiian language. The marked orthography, which includes the kahakō and 'okina, was created as a means to help learners of Hawaiian language determine when to elongate a vowel or where to insert a glottal stop. The intent of this measure is not to claim the superiority of one version of orthography over the other, or to invalidate communities with an unbroken lineage of Hawaiian speakers who do not follow contemporary Hawaiian writing or structures, as communities such as these are vital to Native Hawaiian culture and the State as a whole." Also, "This measure further clarifies that Hawaiian spelling not in conformance with the standards established by this measure will not invalidate an official document, nor will it allow a cause of action to arise."

Once again, thanks to the author(s) of this bill. Please pass it as written. Imua!



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
Friday, February 11, 2022 at 2:15 p.m.

By  
Bonnie Irwin  
Chancellor  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

### HB 2491 HD1 – RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and members of the committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2491 HD1. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 2491 HD1 that proposes to establish a standard for the spelling and punctuation of Hawaiian names and words as they appear in official State and County documents, letterheads, and signage.

UH Hilo is home to Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani, College of Hawaiian Language, that has been leading efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language while also serving as a model to national and international Indigenous communities who also seek to revive their endangered languages.

The college has translation expertise among faculty, M.A. and Ph.D students and the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center at UH Hilo. Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani has also established minimum qualifications (MQs) for demonstrated Hawaiian language proficiency of faculty and staff positions of the college.

We see the bill as an important step towards strengthening the vitality of Hawaiian through increasing government documents, functions, services and a growing workforce community of Hawaiian speakers as a critical effort to ensure the revitalization of the Hawaiian language for generations to come.

Mahalo for allowing UH Hilo to testify on this issue.

**Hawaii State Legislature  
31<sup>st</sup> Legislature, 2022**

**Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee**

February 10, 2022

Aloha mai Representatives - Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and Members

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** concerning HB2491 HD1 which seeks to standardize the Hawaiian language by requiring “all letterheads, documents, state highway signs, symbols, and emblems of the State and other political subdivisions that include Hawaiian names or words to include consistent Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation, including the use of kahako and okina” (HB2491 HD1, 2022).

I am in support of efforts that help normalize the use of Hawaiian language, and am grateful for the spirit of that intent found within this proposal. Any discussion with the State of Hawaii in regards to Hawaiian language, culture, and history is not exempt from the intent of Article X, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution, “The State shall promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history and language.” The Clarabal vs State of Hawaii further articulates the State’s duties through public education as a matter of supporting the revival of the Hawaiian language.

**Revival** means to bring something back, in this case Hawaiian language. The proposed standardization of Hawaiian language in this proposal with the use of diacritical markings is not consistent with definition of language revival, as that form of orthography did not exist in 1893. There are thousands and thousands of pages of Hawaiian from the 1800s until now that does not confirm to the proposed changes. Included in these voluminous amounts of writings are official documents created by, and for the government. As this is a **proposal** being generated by the government, for the government I would like to impress upon you the importance of consistency in this matter, both in orthography and language.

Another key component to language revitalization is the stabilization and growth of the native speaking community and increasing this base with proficient second language learners of the language. The orthography proposed in this bill (kahako and okina) is a helpful tool used to help a language learner develop fluency, but in order to gain **proficiency** the learner must begin to engage with native speech wholeheartedly. This includes the thousands and thousands of pages previously mentioned that do not use the kahako and okina. Think of it as training wheels for a bicycle you will only allow you to go so far with them on.

While recognizing it’s use in certain areas of the Hawaiian speaking community, it contains certain newly created words that deviate from the intent of Article X, Section 4 in regards to revival or bringing back. Again, that language already exists in governmental documents from the 1800s and the Hawaiian language newspapers of the time that covered those issues. I recognize the possible need to address new items that have yet to be found in the newspapers, but that is really a larger issue of creating a proper committee to deal with that, supported by governmental funds.

In addition, I do have concerns of the implications of the use of the term “dialect” in this proposal, and its relationship to the use of “language.” I question the implication that there exists that many dialects of Hawaiian today. A dialect is a regional variation of speech, or language of native speaking (i.e., unbroken lineage) communities. The only region that still maintains multiple generational language transmission, amongst a community of speakers in multiple domains of everyday life is the Niihau community. A common understanding of dialect is that it is one of several varieties of some common language that is mutually intelligible. However, in practice, those terms are not so distinct, and even if we were to hold on to that definition here in regards to the variety of Hawaiian spoken in the Niihau community, it is by default **the** Hawaiian language today and no longer a “dialect.”

Dialect also infers that it is subordinate to the language, which is what is subtly implied here when the proposal speaks of standardizing the spelling of Hawaiian words to benefit the Hawaiian language. It pushes those dialects to the periphery despite the added emphasis on consultation and acknowledgement of their existence.

Finally, there is merit to this proposal, however I strongly disagree with replacing the standard orthography used by native speakers of Hawaiian from the 1800s until today, which is highlighted in the preamble to this very proposal, “He palapala aupuni “ko’u” (the okina here is actually an apostrophe used to differentiate “kou” or your, and “ko’u” or my, one of the few places the apostrophe is used). Often attention is drawn to Kauikeaouli and Keelikolani’s efforts and pro-Hawaiian language stance, and it is important to note that neither used this “standard” (okina and kahako) that is being proposing. This proposal is similar to officially changing the spelling of English to reflect its phonetic spelling. Would we consider that an accommodation, or standard English?

Remember the State has proclaimed that they have a legal responsibility to the **revitalization** of the Hawaiian language, and not the **changing** of the language, and that requires both speakers and non-speaking supporters of the language to hold its self to a higher standard of language excellence, even though it may not be what is popular or convenient in the current situation. This new orthography does not guarantee the proper pronunciation of Hawaiian, and mistakes will continue to be made by the populace. The only thing that will correct that is increasing the number of proficient speakers of Hawaiian.

In conclusion, the preamble highlights Kauikeaouli, Kamehameha III’s “He palapala aupuni ko’u”, I **strongly recommend** upholding the current standard of the Hawaiian language that Kauikeaouli and Keelikolani utilized (i.e., no markings).

Ke oia mau nei no ka pono o ka lahui Kanaka i ka naauao o Hawaii  
(i.e., Kauikeaouli Kamehameha III, Ruth Keelikolani, Joseph Mokuohai Poepoe)

Ma o ka naauao o Hawaii,  
Kahea Faria

**HB-2491-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 1:25:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/11/2022 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Brian Faria	Individual	Comments	Yes

Comments:

**Aloha mai Representatives - Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and Members**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments concerning HB2491 HD1 which seeks to standardize the Hawaiian language by requiring “all letterheads, documents, state highway signs, symbols, and emblems of the State and other political subdivisions that include Hawaiian names or words to include consistent Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation, including the use of kahako and okina” (HB2491 HD1, 2022).**

**I am in support of efforts that help normalize the use of Hawaiian language, and am grateful for the spirit of that intent found within this proposal. I have serious concerns over the following pieces of the proposal:**

- Choosing orthography using diacritical markings (okina and kahako) as the standard language of government documents. Whereas there already exists ample examples of documents produced by, for and about the government without these diacritical markings. The language of today should be consistent with the language of the 1800s.**
- A blanket acceptance of all of the words in Mamaka Kaiiao would not work towards retaining the consistency of the language found in government documents in the 1800s. Strike Mamaka Kaiiao from the proposal**
- The use of dialect in the proposal implies a subordinate position to that of language. Language in this proposal being equated to the standard orthography (kahako and okina) that is being proposed here.**
- Dialects are also regional variations of a native language, a healthy language community is one where intergenerational language transmission and use is taking place, it is used in multiple domains (work, leisure, home, etc.), and has a broad base if users. There is only one community that fits this description, Niihau. If that is the only remaining dialect, it is no longer the dialect, but the Hawaiian language.**
- Although diacritical markings help language learners who are taught how to read them pronounce and decipher the meanings of words, by no means does this insure proper pronunciation, amongst students or the public.**

**The revival of the Hawaiian language is dependant on the growth and support of the native speaking populationa and the development of proficient (high level) speakers. This level of language can only be obtained through extensive engagement with native speakers modes of communication, and for Hawaiian that means a written language absent of the proposed markings of this bill.**

**Me ka oiaio,**

**Brian Faria**

**STRONG  
SUPPORT FOR  
HB2491**

**LATE**

Daniel Lee

Chair Mark Nakashima  
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Room 432

**Chair Nakashima and members,**

This is an important gesture to ensure we are giving the official language of Hawai'i its proper place in society.

**I ask, when our keiki take home letters from their principal and see 'ōlelo written within the letterhead under the state seal, will that not demonstrate the importance that 'ōlelo has in our state?** Does it not send the message to the next generation that 'ōlelo is no longer the language which their grandparents were not allowed to speak, no longer a second-class tokenized language, that would have fallen into extinction like so many indigenous languages but for the tireless works of cultural practioners?

**Researchers estimate that literacy in the Hawaiian Kingdom was up to 98% in the 1800s,** prompting one of the famous mottos of Kamehameha III, "He aupuni palapala ko'u" or, "mine is the kingdom of education." 'Ōlelo was the boast of the nation.

Let us restore the language. With language comes understanding of values, place names, and is the way to make things right. **Let us envision a future in which 'ōlelo is common place.**

I humbly thank you for your consideration.

Warm regards,

Daniel Lee

## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB2491 Relating to the HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

Chair Mark Nakashima  
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**LATE**

Mahalo piha Chair Nakashima and Committee Members for hearing this bill.

I write in **strong support** for restoring the language of this land in prominent places and communications of our state.

As the 'ōlelo noeau goes:

“I ka 'ōlelo nō ke ola, i ka 'ōlelo nō ka make”

*Pukui #1191*

In words there is life, in words there is death

In language there is life, in language there is death

My only request is that this bill be made much more broader, to follow the **Māori Language Act 1987** in Aotearoa which allowed Māori to be used in courts, to have legal precedent, and establish a commission on the Māori language which perpetuates the languages and provides advice on its use. The state should also codify **Article 13 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, which reads:

*“1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.*


*and*

*2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that these rights are protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>





The UNDRIP was originally voted down by the United States on September 2007 under the Bush Administration. Under President Obama this vote was reversed which the State Department describes, "...While not legally binding or a statement of current international law—has both moral and political force. It expresses both the aspirations of indigenous peoples around the world and those of States in seeking to improve their relations with indigenous peoples."<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your consideration.

With Aloha,

Natsumi Ishiki

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<sup>2</sup> <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/184099.pdf>

