

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



TESTIMONY BY:

JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

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

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

February 23, 2022
2:00 P.M.
State Capitol, Teleconference

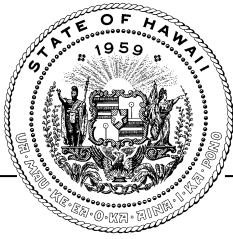
H.B. 2491 H.D. 2
RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

House Committee on Finance

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** H.B. 2491 H.D. 2 that requires consistent use of Hawaiian punctuation and spelling on all letterheads of the state and county agencies, and Hawaiian translation of the office or department's name on the letterhead and website of designated state officials.

Although not required by this measure, the DOT will be adjusting highway signage to incorporate consistent use of Hawaiian punctuation and spelling in support of the correct representation of our state's native language. Signage will be adjusted using a phased approach beginning with current project areas. This process will include consultation with available resources and native Hawaiian speakers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

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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 FINANCE
Wednesday, February 23, 2022
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of
HB 2491 HD 2
RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE.

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House
Committee on Finance.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (“OPSD”) **supports** the intent of HB 2491 HD 2, 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 2 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.*”

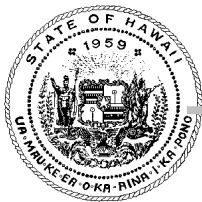
Furthermore, §4E-3(c), HRS, states that “*the departments of the State shall use or cause to be used on all maps and documents prepared by or for them the names and spellings approved by the board on geographic names; provided that such names or spellings shall not be contrary to legally established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

As such, OPSD recommends amending HB 2491 HD 2, §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.



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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

Wednesday, February 23, 2022
Via Videoconference, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita., Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

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

Re: H.B. No. 2491, H.D.2

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. 2, would amend the HRS § 1-13.5 to require all letterheads of the State and counties to include consistent Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation, and require certain state officials 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. The University of Hawaii must 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.

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. 2.**



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

By
Bonnie Irwin
Chancellor
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HB 2491 HD2 – RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2491 HD2. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 2491 HD2 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.

Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani has the expertise in identifying traditional dialects of Hawaiian existing before language shift to English throughout the state, including Ni'ihau. However, providing a list of dialects may be problematic in that claims can be made by people that they speak different dialects. We suggest that only those dialects recorded directly on tape and in writing from those born before statehood are to be identified. We have also seen that there has been testimony on this bill regarding different spelling systems used historically for Hawaiian. The College also has expertise in that area as among our faculty members are individuals with training in historical linguistics and in the history of Hawaiian. In the report on dialects we could include information on historical variation in writing systems and what has become most commonly accepted over time from the earliest efforts to write Hawaiian.

Official use of Hawaiian will require research into historical use of different terms for different government offices and not simply translation. Additionally, some of the government offices and positions will require creation of new terminology. In 1995 through HB1798 the legislature established the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian language center at UH Hilo to serve the use of Hawaiian in schools, especially immersion schools and schools serving Ni'ihau children. The Hale Kuamo'o then incorporated the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee established from the beginnings of the Pūnana Leo preschools in

1982. That committee has included representation from various islands and native speaker communities to create vocabulary and disseminate it for use in schools. The Hale Kuamo'o Center was incorporated into the Hawaiian language college mandated at UH Hilo by the 1996 legislature in Act 315. As a result, HRS 304A-1302(3) requires the Hawaiian language college to provide a Hawaiian language support center that includes research and language development, which could include the purposes of HB 2491 HD2 and the overall coordination and dissemination aspects important to making this effort successful. However, we see that this responsibility as requiring additional funding, as like the increased attention to the Hawaiian language college and its partner 'Imiloa mandated in HB 2543 HD1 and SD2 of 2020, it calls for increased support for the larger state use of Hawaiian beyond university language courses.

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.

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NALANI K. KAAUWAI BRUN, DIRECTOR



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Testimony of Nalani Kaauwai Brun Director, Office of Economic Development

Before the
House Committee on Finance
February 23, 2022; 2:00 pm
Conference Room 308 Videoconference

Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

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).

Kauai County is in support of efforts that help normalize the use of Hawaiian language, and we are grateful for the spirit of this effort that is found within this proposal however we feel recognition of the language of our Niihau community is not acknowledged adequately and properly considered. Kauai County continues to have an existing partnership with Ka Leo O Na Kupa which is a team of county government employees and Niihau speakers to help recognize and protect the Native Hawaiian language.

Our county is the home of the Niihau community, the only native speakers left who have never lost the Hawaiian language. Their speakers are more fluent in Hawaiian than English and rely on translated materials into their language for comprehension. This request is to help ensure that traditional native speakers and their language are protected from extinction in every way possible. To insure this, we must not forget, through our actions, that they exist and live at the core of the language itself. The Ni’ihau community continues to remind us that the use of diacritical markings is for helping students learn the language but it is not part of the language that we are all trying to revive. We hope that someday, the diacritical markings can be left by the wayside because the language will be so well used that it is not needed anymore. That is the gold standard we all reach for.

Kauai County’s request regarding this bill is to at least include a disclaimer in this bill that states:

The use of diacritical marks is to aid in proper pronunciation and is not used by native speakers. Since the County of Kauai is home to this population of native speakers and we cannot tell which documents they are or are not reading, we ask to not be included in this requirement.

We would like you to note that newly invented terms published in the book, Mamaka Kaiao, are likely unintelligible to native speakers of the Niihau community.

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
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

For hearing Wednesday February 23, 2022

Re: HB 2491 HD2 RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE.

Requires all letterheads of the State and counties to include consistent Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation. Requires certain state officials 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. Requires UH 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. (HD2)

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!

Hawaii State Legislature
31st Legislature, 2022

Finance Committee

February 19, 2022

Aloha mai Representatives - Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** concerning HB2491 HD2 which seeks to standardize the Hawaiian language by requiring “all letterheads and the main page of official websites that include Hawaiian names or words to include consistent Hawaiian names, spelling, and punctuation, including the use of kahako and okina” (HB2491 HD2, 2022).

I am in support of efforts that help normalize the use of Hawaiian language. As a reminder, 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 conform 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 its 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.

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 aupuni palapala “ko’u” (cited in Kuokoa, 1868) - 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. It is also important to note that **neither Kauikeaouli nor Keelikolani used this “standard”** (okina and kahako) that is being proposed. This proposal is similar to officially changing the spelling of English to reflect its phonetic spelling. Would we consider that an accommodation, or just 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 itself 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 aupuni palapala ko’u” therefore, 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

**Hawaii State Legislature
31st Legislature, 2022**

House Committee on Finance

February 19, 2022

Aloha Representatives - Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita 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 Kaiao would not work towards retaining the consistency of the language found in government documents in the 1800s. Strike Mamaka Kaiao 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 of 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 ensure proper pronunciation, amongst students or the public.

The revival of the Hawaiian language is dependent on the growth and support of the native speaking populations 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

HB-2491-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 7:54:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Regina Peterson	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

I am writing in support of house bill 2491. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is the mother tongue of Hawai‘i and should be used and seen and spoken everywhere. It is my kuleana as a Kumu ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i to help ensure our language never dies as it almost did when it was banned in the early 1900’s by people NOT of this place, for indoctrination, manipulation, and control of those, again, NOT of this place. That situation was not right at all, but that part of Hawai‘i’s history has driven my ‘i‘ini, my desire, to do whatever I need to do, to, again ensure it never happens again. The law says that the Hawaiian language is one of the official languages of Hawai‘i. If you are a descendant of the people of this ‘āina, it is your kuleana to keep the language and culture alive, if you are a settler or visitor here, it is your kuleana to respect and to learn not only about the true history and culture of this ‘āina, but to understand and learn the language as well. If you are in these government entity commerce corporation seats, trying to lead and represent any part of Hawai‘i, it is your fiduciary duty to respect and learn the true history of Hawai‘i, the true Hawaiian culture, and the true language of this place and to especially uphold the words of Kamehameha III, King KaiuKeaouli, Ua mau ke EA o ka ‘āina i ka pono. What does EA mean? EA means life, breath, rule, sovereignty, rise up. Hawaiian language is the life of Hawai‘i, the breath of Hawai‘i. Hawaiian language brings life, Hawaiian language is life. Although your decisions do not always bring life to our people and spaces and places, I urge you to EA up, rise up and support this bill to start to live the language of life everyday, the Hawaiian language WILL make a more positive impact on your decision making, It will make a more positive impact on your life, it will change your world view and your perspective on the importance for this ‘āina and people. I promise!!!...it has for my life. Hawaiian language was not initially written with the kahakō or ‘okina, for it was an oral language. However, because there are those that do not speak it on an everyday matter, yet, having the Hawaiian language on ALL letterheads, websites, emblems, and symbols, spelt correctly and consistently with the kahakō and ‘okina helps to provide correct meaning and pronunciation in it’s use. I feel ALL official documents and bills should be written in Hawaiian language as well as English, it will help provide employment for our native Hawaiian speakers. However, this bill is a start for you, officials of this government entity commerce corporation, to know what our Hawaiian words mean, use it correctly, and say it correctly. Want to learn?, oleloola@gmail.com, I can teach you the basics, and you’ll see what i mean about Hawaiian language changing your worldview and your perspective for the betterment of this ‘āina and the people of Hawai‘i AND bringing YOU life!!! E ola ka

‘ōlelo Hawai‘i!!! The Hawaiian language shall live. Know what it means, use it correctly, say it correctly. Support this bill and make Hawaiian language live in you and around you!!!

Mahalo,

Regina Peterson

(Nani)

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB2491

Daniel Lee

Chair Sylvia Luke
Committee on Finance
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 306

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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 Sylvia Luke
Committee on Finance
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Mahalo piha Chair Luke 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”

Pukai #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.”¹

¹ <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."²

Thank you for your consideration.

With Aloha,

Natsumi Ishiki

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



HB-2491-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 1:51:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Nancy & Zeb Jones	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Honorable Finance Committee Members:

We submit this testimony in SUPPORT of HB2491, HD 2 relating to, among other things, the Hawaiian language appearing on all letterheads, stationery, and websites of the State and counties and the inclusion of consistent Hawaiian names, spelling and punctuation. The Hawaiian language – one of this State’s two recognized official languages – represents an innate component of Hawai`i’s culture and identity. Accordingly, the State needs to set a standard(s) for the spelling and punctuation of Hawaiian names and words for the sake of consistency and uniformity. We support all proposed language changes relative to letterhead/stationery and signage in HD2, but encourage a phased approach to implementation (especially with often more costly signage upgrades/corrections) as our State’s economy continues to recover and emerge from the COVID pandemic that depleted our financial resources for two years.

Given the above reasons, we urge your honorable members to please pass HB2491, HD 2 out of your committee. Mahalo again for this opportunity to present this testimony supporting HB2491, HD 2.

Warm aloha,

Nancy & Zeb Jones

Hydroponics Alternatives LLC - Wai`anae