

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 03 2023

RE: S.B. No. 610

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 610 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to recognize American Sign Language (ASL) as a fully developed, autonomous, natural language with its own distinct grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural heritage.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, Disability and Communication Access Board, Aloha State Association of the Deaf, and eleven individuals.

Your Committee finds that ASL is a language that is tied deeply to culture and identity, similar to other languages that are characteristic of ancestry or national origin. Your Committee additionally finds that other states have legally recognized ASL as a language, due to its importance to the United States' deaf and hard-of-hearing population. Furthermore, Hawai'i took initiative in acknowledging ASL by recognizing it as a world language for public school language requirement purposes through section 302A-322, Hawaii Revised Statutes. This measure will ultimately increase public understanding of the State's deaf and hard-of-hearing population, which will essentially lead to



equitable access in employment, public awareness, and civil participation.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 610 and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Second Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Judiciary
JDC

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 610	HHS, JDC	2/24/23

The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
 If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312 Pass, with amendments 2311 Hold 2310 Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
RHOADS, Karl (C)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike (VC)	✓			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C.	✓			
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.				✓
AWA, Brenton	✓			
TOTAL	4	—	—	1

Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:


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*Only one measure per Record of Votes