
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii is home to a
2 diverse population, with a significant portion of its residents
3 being immigrants or individuals from mixed-status families.
4 According to the United States Census Bureau, approximately
5 eighteen per cent of Hawaii's population is foreign-born.
6 According to the American Immigration Council, nearly eight per
7 cent of Hawaii's population are United States-born residents
8 living with at least one immigrant parent.

9 The legislature further finds that many foreign-born
10 residents face challenges navigating complex immigration
11 proceedings in immigration court without legal representation.
12 Language barriers, financial constraints, and the lack of
13 accessible legal resources exacerbate these challenges.

14 The legislature also finds that individuals facing
15 deportation or other immigration-related proceedings in
16 immigration court lack the right to government-funded legal
17 representation, leaving them to navigate complex legal systems



1 alone unless they retain costly counsel or other assistance on
2 their own. Unaccompanied minors and deferred action for
3 childhood arrivals immigrants, who are the most vulnerable, face
4 immigration proceedings in immigration court often without
5 representation. Studies have shown that individuals with legal
6 representation are significantly more likely to achieve
7 favorable outcomes in immigration proceedings, including relief
8 from deportation or the ability to remain with their families.

9 The purpose of this Act is to establish a program to
10 provide access to legal representation for individuals in the
11 State facing immigration-related proceedings in immigration
12 court, assuring due process and promoting family unity,
13 community stability, and economic security.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 601, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and
16 to read as follows:

17 **"PART . DUE PROCESS IN IMMIGRATION PROCEEDINGS PROGRAM**

18 **§601- Due process in immigration proceedings program;**
19 **establishment.** (a) There is established the due process in
20 immigration proceedings program. The judiciary shall administer
21 funding for the program and contract with nonprofit



1 organizations, legal service providers, and other entities to
2 implement and operate the program and provide program services.

3 (b) The purpose of the due process in immigration
4 proceedings program shall be to provide legal representation to
5 individuals residing in the State who are facing immigration-
6 related proceedings in immigration court, regardless of their
7 ability to pay.

8 (c) The judiciary shall issue requests for proposals to
9 select and contract with nonprofit organizations, legal service
10 providers, and other entities to implement and operate the due
11 process in immigration proceedings program.

12 **§601- Powers and duties.** In the administration of the
13 due process in immigration proceedings program, the judiciary
14 shall ensure that the entities contracted to implement and
15 operate the program:

16 (1) Provide legal representation to individuals in
17 immigration-related proceedings in immigration court,
18 including but not limited to deportation defense,
19 asylum applications, and other immigration relief
20 processes;



- 1 (2) Prioritize services for individuals who are detained,
2 at risk of deportation, or otherwise vulnerable due to
3 their immigration status;
- 4 (3) Partner with community-based organizations and legal
5 service providers to ensure culturally and
6 linguistically appropriate services;
- 7 (4) Partner with the university of Hawaii at Manoa William
8 S. Richardson School of Law in training and educating
9 law students and legal practitioners to provide legal
10 representation to individuals in immigration-related
11 proceedings in immigration court, including but not
12 limited to deportation defense, asylum applications,
13 and other immigration relief processes;
- 14 (5) Conduct outreach and education to inform impacted
15 communities about the availability of legal
16 representation and related resources; and
- 17 (6) Collect and report data on the program's outcomes,
18 including the number of individuals served, types of
19 cases handled, length of time each case has been
20 pending, and success rates, while maintaining
21 confidentiality and protecting sensitive information.



1 **\$601- Eligibility.** The judiciary shall establish
2 eligibility criteria for the program, which shall include:

- 3 (1) The individual is a resident of the State; and
4 (2) The individual's income is at or below two hundred
5 fifty per cent of the federal poverty level for
6 Hawaii; provided that an exception may be made for
7 individuals facing extraordinary circumstances.

8 **\$601- Annual report.** (a) The judiciary shall submit
9 an annual report to the legislature no later than twenty days
10 prior to the convening of each regular session based on the work
11 of the entities contracted to implement and operate the program.

12 (b) The annual report shall include:

- 13 (1) The number of individuals served by the due process in
14 immigration proceedings program;
15 (2) The types of cases handled;
16 (3) The outcomes of the cases;
17 (4) The length of time each case has been pending; and
18 (5) Recommendations for improving access to legal
19 representation for individuals in immigration-related
20 proceedings in immigration court."



1 SECTION 3. Chapter 601, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by designating sections 601-1 to 601-21 as part I,
3 entitled "General Provisions".

4 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
6 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
7 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
8 year 2026-2027 for the establishment and administration of the
9 due process in immigration proceedings program, including
10 funding for legal service providers, outreach efforts, and
11 administrative costs.

12 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary
13 for the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



Report Title:

Filipino Caucus; Due Process in Immigration Proceedings Program;
Judiciary; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Due Process in Immigration Proceedings Program within the Judiciary to provide legal representation to individuals in immigration-related proceedings in immigration court. Appropriates funds. (HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

