

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY'S 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I INITIATIVES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that article XV, section
2 4, of the Hawaii State Constitution affirms that English and
3 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) shall be the official
4 languages of the State. The legislature also finds that the
5 Hawaii State Constitution provides for the preservation and
6 promotion of native Hawaiian culture, history, and language in
7 various provisions including article X, section 4, which states,
8 "The State shall promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history
9 and language."

10 The legislature further finds that the judiciary has
11 already taken initial steps to explore ways of providing 'Ōlelo
12 Hawai'i resources, interpreter, and translation services to the
13 public. To advance this work, in 2015, the legislature adopted
14 a concurrent resolution, H.C.R. No. 217, Session Laws of Hawaii
15 2015, that requested the judiciary to convene a task force to
16 examine and report on establishing 'Ōlelo Hawai'i resources for
17 the judiciary. The task force report made several findings



1 including that 'Ōlelo Hawai'i "possesses appropriate specificity,
2 sophistication, and technical breadth of terminology to
3 accurately translate legal terminology from English into 'Ōlelo
4 Hawai'i". Additionally, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's
5 2009-2013 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 'Ōlelo
6 Hawai'i ranks number five in languages other than English spoken
7 at home in the State. Further, the task force found that as an
8 independent branch of government, the judiciary could
9 effectively serve as a focused model to demonstrate the use of
10 'Ōlelo Hawai'i.

11 While the judiciary has continued its efforts to make
12 resources and services available in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, it is time
13 for more attention and funding to move these efforts forward.
14 The task force report made several recommendations and
15 identified projects that can serve as a guide to the judiciary.

16 The legislature notes that this Act should not be viewed as
17 groundbreaking. Other countries that recognize more than one
18 official language provide access to government services and
19 documents in all official languages, and the United Nations
20 operates in six official languages.



1 The purpose of this Act is to support the judiciary's 'Ōlelo
2 Hawai'i initiatives. It is not the legislature's intent that the
3 requested funds supplant the judiciary's existing funding or
4 budget requests.

5 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$300,000 or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
8 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
9 2026-2027 to support the judiciary's 'Ōlelo Hawai'i projects.

10 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary
11 for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

13

INTRODUCED BY: _____

1/ Karl Akaka



S.B. NO. 781

Report Title:

Olelo Hawaii Initiatives; Appropriations

Description:

Appropriates funds to support the Olelo Hawaii Initiatives.

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