

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



ANNE E. PERREIRA-EUSTAQUIO  
DIRECTOR

JOANN A. VIDINHAR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.labor.hawaii.gov](http://www.labor.hawaii.gov)

March 18, 2021

To: The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Chair,  
The Honorable Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

Date: Thursday, March 18, 2021

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Place: Via Videoconference

From: Anne Perreira-Eustaquio, Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: H.C.R. No. 121 WORKING GROUP LEP, DISABLED AND  
EMERGENCIES/DISASTERS**

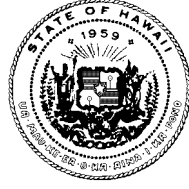
Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Eli, and Members of the Committee,

The department supports the intent of this measure that seeks to address the communication to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and disabled persons before, during, and after an emergency or natural disaster.

The department notes that the timetable provided for the working group's reporting requirement to the Legislature is not adequate.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this vital matter.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 17, 2021

TO: The Honorable Representative Linda Ichiyama, Chair  
House Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HCR 121/HR 97** – REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER EMERGENCIES AND NATURAL DISASTERS.

Hearing: Day, 2021, Time p.m.  
Conference Room , State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports these resolutions.

**PURPOSE:** These resolutions request the governor to convene a working group to develop recommendations for effective communications with limited English proficient persons and persons with disabilities before, during, and after emergencies and natural disasters.

DHS will participate on this working group. The disparate impact of the pandemic on Pacific Islander communities highlights the necessity for additional work to be done to improve coordination and prioritization of resources towards a range of communication strategies.

This experience also reinforces the importance of the ongoing work of the Office of Language Access (OLA) and its role to provide central coordination and technical assistance to

state agencies to translate or interpret information to improve access to benefits and services for all Hawaii residents.<sup>1</sup>

State and federal law require DHS and others government entities to maintain language access services for Hawaii's culturally diverse population regarding all public benefits and services. All entities receiving federal funds are subject to provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq. (Title VI), that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance and must provide meaningful access to services.

Similarly, the value and importance of the work and contribution of the Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) are highlighted particularly during this legislative session as greater access and participation by individuals with disabilities to legislative and other meetings are greatly improved. DCAB is a vital resource to agencies and the communities at all times to maintain access to services and remain compliant with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.<sup>2</sup>

Especially in the current pandemic and other emergency management events where additional federal assistance is necessary to address the tremendous needs of Hawaii's residents and businesses, government agencies need the services and technical expertise that OLA and DCAB provide to maintain meaningful access to benefits and services for Hawaii's residents with limited English language proficiency and or who have disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these resolutions.

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<sup>1</sup> See OLA website at <https://health.hawaii.gov/ola/>.

<sup>2</sup> See DCAB website at <https://health.hawaii.gov/dcab/about-us/>.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
March 18, 2021

The Honorable Representative Linda Ichiyama, Chair  
House Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness  
The Thirty-First Legislature  
Regular Session of 2021  
State Capitol, State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Ichiyama and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: HCR 121/HR97 – Convene a working group for effective communications with limited English proficient persons and persons with disabilities.**

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities **appreciated the intent of HCR 121/HR97** which requests the Governor to convene a working group to develop recommendations for effective communications with limited English proficient persons and persons with disabilities before, during, and after emergencies and natural disasters.

The Council has been very fortunate to have the Office of Language Access (OLA) at our beacon call to assure we stay in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as well as the Executive Order 13166 of 2000, which directs all entities that receive federal funding to have meaningful access to limited English proficient persons. OLA is the responsible attached State Agency to assure the State of Hawaii remains in compliance.

We understand the State has been cited more than once by the federal court, federal offices of civil rights, including the Department of Justice, and Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, for its failure to provide language accessible services for limited English proficient persons; and during the pandemic, the community expressed concern and dismay regarding access to essential state services including health related information and unemployment benefits in a language they understand. However, it is our understanding once the Office of Language Access was informed of the issue(s), they were able to immediately address them.

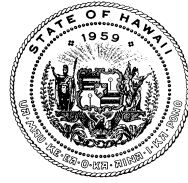
In all due respect, it appears we need to do is a better job promoting and using the Office of Language Access. The Council will fully participate in a working group to support the Office of Language Access.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments **to HCR 121/HR97.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus".

Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
**OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS**  
1177 Alakea Street, Room B-100  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.ola@doh.hawaii.gov

### Testimony COMMENTING on HCR 121/ HR 97

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP  
TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH  
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER EMERGENCIES AND NATURAL DISASTERS.

REPRESENTATIVE LINDA ICHIYAMA, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Hearing Date: 3/18/2021

Room Number: Via Vedioconference

1 **Agency's Position:** The Office of Language Access (OLA) appreciates the intent of the House  
2 Concurrent Resolution 121/ House Resolution 97, as it seeks to establish a working group to  
3 develop recommendations for effective communications with limited English proficient persons  
4 and persons with disabilities before, during, and after emergencies and natural disasters, and  
5 offer the following comments.

6 **Purpose and Justification:** The agency notes that the aspirational and exploratory goal of both  
7 resolutions are in line with the mission of OLA which is to address the language access needs of  
8 Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons and ensure their meaningful access to services,  
9 programs, and activities offered by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state  
10 government, including departments, offices, commissions, boards, and other state-funded  
11 agencies.

12 The lack of English proficiency has strong impacts on people's economic and social  
13 activities, safety, health literacy and wellness, access to education, employment, and important  
14 public assistance, benefits, programs and services. Languages barriers are known to be an  
15 important contributor to the ineffectiveness of emergency information dissemination and related  
16 problems, especially in multicultural communities.

1           As the recent events demonstrate, disaster/emergency can strike our state anywhere,  
2 anytime, and often without warning. With so many of Hawaii's residents speaking a language  
3 other than English at home, it is critical that all our communities have access to service and  
4 information to help them prepare for and respond to emergencies.

5           The establishment of a working group is an important step toward information-sharing  
6 and the development of ideas and action steps to address the language needs before, during, and  
7 after emergencies and natural disasters.

8           Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on these resolutions.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HR 97**

**REPRESENTATIVE LINDA ICHIYAMA, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

**REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Hearing Date: 3/18/2021      Room Number: 309

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Luke and Members of the Committees:

The Hawai`i Friends of Civil Rights (HFCR) stands in Strong Support of House Resolution 97, with recommendations, and extends its gratitude to the Committees for hearing this measure.

HR 97 proposes to establish a working group to share information and solutions, develop and leverage resources, and formulate action steps to ensure meaningful access for limited English proficient, deaf, blind, and disabled persons during times of natural disasters or other emergencies. HR 97 is aligned with the mission and business goals of State and county offices to assure the safety and welfare for all people in Hawai`i.

The working group is inclusive. It will bring to the table government emergency response entities, information technology leadership, government offices with keen insight into communication issues facing limited English proficient persons and persons with disabilities, relevant community advocacy organizations, and persons with disabilities and limited English proficiency with the singular aligned goal of improving communication access during times of crisis.

The HFCR and the Hawai`i Coalition for Immigrant Rights recently engaged in a conversation with Governor Ige to express the deep concerns raised by limited English proficient persons in accessing vital COVID-19 health and safety information and Unemployment Compensation benefits. At the conclusion of our conversation, Governor Ige pledged his support for a working group and agreed to appoint a Co-Chair.

The HFCR respectfully requests that page 3, lines 36 through 39 of the HR 97 be amended as follows:

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to assess the current status of communication access for persons with a disability and limited English proficient persons

during natural disasters and emergencies; assess the current communication needs and challenges across government entities during natural disasters and emergencies; identify information technology resources and other resources and costs; identify and propose legislative solutions; and, submit recommendations for advancing the purpose of the Resolution .”

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

Amy Agbayani  
Co-Chair HFCE

Pat McManaman  
Co-Chair HFCE





## Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i

A Project of the William S. Richardson School of Law

2515 Dole Street, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

T: (808) 688-3313 / [www.mlpchawaii.org](http://www.mlpchawaii.org)

Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair

Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: March 18, 2021

### **Re: Support of HCR121/HR97: Requesting The Governor To Convene A Working Group To Develop Recommendations For Effective Communications With Limited English Proficient Persons And Persons With Disabilities Before, During, And After Emergencies And Natural Disasters**

Dear Committee Members,

The Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP) represents patients at a community health center with their legal needs. Most of our clients are from Pacific Islander communities and have been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. We strongly support HCR121/HR97.

This working group is an important step in fixing the shortcomings revealed during the COVID-19 emergency. Through our work at the MLP, we have seen story after story of how the lack of language access has been a battle for our communities for a long time, and especially during this pandemic. We saw it with the Department of Health, as entire communities got delayed public health messages and individual families got delayed contact-tracing resources during this deadly pandemic. We saw it with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, as many LEP people could not access Unemployment Insurance—benefits which they have paid into and are entitled to receive—because of language access denials. These challenges are well documented.<sup>1</sup>

Given these lessons, a working group to share ensure meaningful communications access for limited English proficient, deaf, blind, and disabled persons during times of natural disasters or other emergencies is necessary to ensure that Hawai'i is prepared to protect all of its residents.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony supporting HCR121/HR97.

Dina Shek

Legal Director, Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Anita Hofschneider, *Hawaii Pacific Islanders Are Twice As Likely to Be Hospitalized for COVID-19*, Civil Beat, November 20, 2020, at <https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/11/hawaii-pacific-islanders-are-twice-as-likely-to-be-hospitalized-for-covid-19/>; Anita Hofschneider, *Health Officials Knew COVID-19 Would Hit Pacific Islanders Hard. The State Still Fell Short*, Civil Beat, August 17, 2020, at <https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/health-officials-knew-covid-19-would-hit-pacific-islanders-hard-the-state-still-fell-short/>; Anita Hofschneider, *Advocates: Lack of Interpreter Services at Unemployment Office is Illegal*, Civil Beat, July 7, 2020, at <https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/advocates-lack-of-interpreter-services-at-unemployment-office-is-illegal/>

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HCR 121/HR97  
REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO  
DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH  
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER EMERGENCIES AND NATURAL DISASTERS.**

Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair  
Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

Hearing Date: 3/18/2021

Room Number: 309

Chair Ichiyama and Vice-Chair Eli,

The Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) SUPPORTS HCR 121/HR 97, which will establish a working group to ensure meaningful communications access for limited English proficient (LEP), deaf, blind, and disabled persons during times of natural disasters or other emergencies.

The COVID-19 pandemic emergency revealed the current gaps in our agency's ability to provide meaningful access. It is well documented that state agencies were unable to properly serve LEP communities during the crisis of the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> These shortcomings had dire consequences, as, for example, Pacific Islanders were twice as likely to be killed or hospitalized by COVID-19.<sup>2</sup> And although the COVID-19 emergency exposed these challenges with greater clarity, they have long been a concern. Hawai'i has been cited repeatedly by the federal Department of Justice and the federal court for failure to ensure meaningful access to services by LEP persons.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Anita Hofschneider, *Health Officials Knew COVID-19 Would Hit Pacific Islanders Hard. The State Still Fell Short*, Civil Beat, August 17, 2020, at <https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/08/health-officials-knew-covid-19-would-hit-pacific-islanders-hard-the-state-still-fell-short/>; Anita Hofschneider, *Advocates: Lack of Interpreter Services at Unemployment Office is Illegal*, Civil Beat, July 7, 2020, at <https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/07/advocates-lack-of-interpreter-services-at-unemployment-office-is-illegal/>

<sup>2</sup> Anita Hofschneider, *Hawaii Pacific Islanders Are Twice As Likely to Be Hospitalized for COVID-19*, Civil Beat, November 20, 2020, at <https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/11/hawaii-pacific-islanders-are-twice-as-likely-to-be-hospitalized-for-covid-19/>.

<sup>3</sup> Hawai'i Department of Human Services, Consent Decree (2008); Hawai'i Office of Elections, United States District Court for the District of Hawai'i, Settlement Agreement (2010); Hawai'i Department of Transportation, FACE v. DOT, United States District Court for the District of Hawai'i Settlement Agreement (2015); Hawai'i Judiciary, Technical Assistance Agreement (2015); Hawai'i Public Housing Authority, Settlement Agreement with the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission (2016). Additionally, multiple language access complaints were filed in 2020 against the Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations Unemployment Insurance Division for its failure to translate vital documents,

As we head into the next chapter of the COVID-19 fight with vaccine distribution and an eye toward economic recovery, and as we face natural disasters like the recent flash foods, meaningful access is as important as ever. We will only be able to end the COVID-19 emergency and be well-prepared for future emergencies if state agencies are able to meaningfully communicate with *all* of Hawai'i's residents. This resolution is an critical step to that goal.

The resolution proposes to establish a working group to share information and solutions, develop and leverage resources, and formulate action steps to ensure meaningful communications access for limited English proficient, deaf, blind, and disabled persons during times of natural disasters or other emergencies. The working group brings together governmental emergency response entities, information technology leadership, government agencies, and community advocates. The purpose is singularly aligned with the mission and business goals of many State and county offices to assure the safety and welfare for all people in Hawaii.

HCIR recently engaged in a conversation with Governor Ige to express the deep concerns raised by limited English proficient persons in accessing vital COVID-19 health and safety information and Unemployment Insurance benefits throughout the pandemic. At the conclusion of our conversation, Governor Ige pledged his support for a working group. We are grateful for his support, and we are encouraged that this working group may be an important step forward in our goal of keeping *all* of Hawai'i safe and healthy.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

Catherine Chen, Co-chair, Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights

Liza Ryan Gill, Co-chair, Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights

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including applications for Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), and its failure to provide interpreters. These complaints remain pending with the federal Department of Labor, Civil Rights Division.

**HCR-121**

Submitted on: 3/17/2021 9:21:30 AM

Testimony for PDP on 3/18/2021 10:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>             | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| amy agbayani        | Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 121**

REPRESENTATIVE LINDA ICHIYAMA, CHAIR

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Hearing Date: 3/18/2021 Room Number: 309

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Luke and Members of the Committees:

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights (HFCR) stands in Strong Support of HCR 121, with recommendations, and extends its gratitude to the Committees for hearing this measure.

HCR 121 proposes to establish a working group to share information and solutions, develop and leverage resources, and formulate action steps to ensure meaningful access for limited English proficient, deaf, blind, and disabled persons during times of natural disasters or other emergencies. HCR 121 is aligned with the mission and

business goals of State and county offices to assure the safety and welfare for all people in Hawai`i.

1. The working group is inclusive. It will bring to the table government emergency response entities, information technology leadership, government offices with keen insight into communication issues facing limited English proficient persons and persons with disabilities, relevant community advocacy organizations, and persons with disabilities and limited English proficiency with the singular aligned goal of improving communication access during times of crisis.
2. HFCR and the Hawai`i Coalition for Immigrant Rights recently engaged in a conversation with Governor Ige to express the deep concerns raised by limited English proficient persons in accessing vital COVID-19 health and safety information and Unemployment Compensation benefits. At the conclusion of our conversation, Governor Ige pledged his support for a working group and agreed to appoint a Co-Chair.

The HFCR respectfully requests that page3, lines 36 through 39 of the HCR 121 be amended as follows:

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to assess the current status of communication access for persons with a disability and limited English proficient persons during natural disasters and emergencies; assess the current communication needs and challenges across government entities during natural disasters and emergencies; identify information technology resources and other resources and costs; identify and propose legislative solutions; and, submit recommendations for advancing the purpose of the Resolution .”

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

Amy Agbayani

Co-Chair HFCR

Pat McManaman

Co-Chair HFCR



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Representative Linda Ichiyama, Chair  
Representative Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair  
Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO

DATE: Thursday, March 18, 2021 (10:30 a.m., Conference Rm. 309)

RE: **IN SUPPORT of HCR121/HR97, Requesting the Governor to Convene a Working Group to Develop Recommendations for Effective Communications with Limited English Proficient Persons and Persons with Disabilities Before, During, and After Emergencies and Natural Disasters**

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been serving people in need in the State of Hawaii since 1947.

**CCH supports HCR121/HR97**, which would establish a working group to provide recommendations on effective communications with Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities before, during, and after emergencies and natural disasters.

CCH provides services for many Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients through many of our programs. CCH also serves over 4,000 older adults each year. We recognizes the importance of effective communication to ensure that individuals with communication challenges are prepared and safe during times of emergencies and natural disasters.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i asks for your support of HCR121/HR97. For more information or questions, please feel free to email Diane Terada, Division Administrator, at [diane.terada@catholiccharitieshawaii.org](mailto:diane.terada@catholiccharitieshawaii.org) or call her via phone at 527-4702.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

P.O. Box 4777  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

March 18, 2021

The Honorable Representative Linda Ichiyama, Chair  
House Committee on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 309  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: HCR 121/HR 97 Requesting the Governor to Convene a Working Group to Develop Recommendations for Effective Communications with Limited English Proficient Persons and Persons with Disabilities Before, During and After Emergencies and Natural Disasters.

Dear Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Eli, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Debra Jackson and I am an individual who is hard of hearing, member of the Deaf and Blind Task Force, disability advocate, and retired Planner/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator of the Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB). I **support** of HCR 121/HR 97. The intent of HCR 121/HR 97 is to ensure equal access to information communicated to the public by people who have limited English proficiency and communication needs that are different from the English speaking community.

One of my job duties at DCAB was to develop an "Interagency Action Plan for the Emergency Preparedness of People with Disabilities and Special Health Needs." It involved all stakeholders including State, county and federal emergency preparedness agencies, people with various types of disabilities, family members, and service providers. A portion of that plan included notifications and communication being accessible to individuals with disabilities, and I developed and revised the plan. However, that plan has not been revised since 2009 and needs to be updated.

I offer the following suggestions for amendments to these resolutions:

1. Specify Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) as the agency responsible for convening the working group and reporting back to the Legislature, and that they co-convene the group with the Office of Language Access (OLA) and the Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) instead of the Governor's Office;
2. Identify the Legislative Reference Bureau to do necessary research and compile a report to the legislature of the findings and recommendations of the working group;
3. Shorten the list of state participants and limit it to those with expertise in the subject matter stated in HCR 121;
4. Include the President of the Hawaii Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (H.R.I.D.) or designee as a member of the working group, and a representative from a comparable group of commonly used (spoken) foreign language interpreters in Hawaii;

5. Include research on studies, reports, and programs that have already completed or implemented about including people with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency in emergency preparedness information disseminated to the community; and
6. Start from the premise of diversity and inclusion of ideas. Government agencies may have specific expertise, but unless a person lives with a disability or a communication barrier and needs to face it daily, they do not have the right to mandate what is required to meet the needs of a population for which they are not familiar. We are adults who can express our own needs and assist in the development of a solution.

An example of research, report or program that was developed on the Mainland regarding people with disabilities and emergency management, is the "Feeling Safe, Being Safe" program that was developed in California, and brought to Hawaii and adapted for local use. There may already be some answers available related to the subject matter of these resolutions. We need to research what has been done to include people with limited English proficiency and people with communication disabilities to provide equal access to emergency information that is provided to the general public. There is no need to reinvent the wheel if there is an available answer already. We may just need to review it and adapt it to what our need are in Hawaii. "Feeling Safe, Being Safe" is a very successful program in Hawaii. It was not only adapted for local needs, but it has been enhanced by people with intellectual/developmental disabilities who use it in Hawaii, and we were informed this week that it is a nationally recognized program in Washington, D.C.

With my experience and background, I would be willing to serve as a member of this working group should HCR 121 pass both chambers and is adopted.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Debra L. Jackson  
Member  
Deaf and Blind Task Force



**HCR-121**

Submitted on: 3/17/2021 10:36:36 AM

Testimony for PDP on 3/18/2021 10:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Thaddeus Pham       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Aloha PDP Committee,

I am writing in support of HCR121. As a public health professional working with low English proficiency (LEP) people and the son of refugees, I have witnessed firsthand the need for culturally competent and in-language access for many local communities, especially during a disaster. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to highlight the stark disparities in healthcare access, especially for LEP communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

**HCR-121**

Submitted on: 3/17/2021 10:42:45 AM

Testimony for PDP on 3/18/2021 10:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Christy MacPherson  | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

I am in strong support of HCR121. Language access is critical before, during, and after emergencies, disasters and always.