STAND. COM. REP. NO. 632

Honolulu, Hawaii MAR 04 2021 RE: S.B. No. 537

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi President of the Senate Thirty-First State Legislature Regular Session of 2021 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 537 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 as a fully developed, autonomous, natural language with its own 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, Deaf and Blind Task Force, Maui Deaf Friends, and six individuals.

Your Committee finds that American Sign Language (ASL) is the primary language of many persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in the United States, including residents of Hawaii. Your Committee further finds that, although ASL is a fully developed, autonomous, natural language with its own grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural heritage, it was erroneously viewed for many years as a pantomime and a poor substitute for spoken speech. Your Committee additionally finds that recognizing ASL as a language will create more equitable access in numerous areas, including employment, public awareness, and civic participation.



STAND. COM. REP. NO. 632 Page 2

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. 537 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-First Legislature State of Hawaiʻi

## Record of Votes Committee on Judiciary JDC

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:			Date:	
SB 537	HMS, JOC			02/24/2021	
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.					
If so, then the previous decision was to:					
The Recommendation is:					
Pass, unamended Pass, with amendments Hold Recommit 2312 2311 2310 2313					
Members		Aye	Aye (WI	R) Nay	Excused
RHOADS, Karl (C)					
KEOHOKALOLE, Jarrett (VC)		<b>v</b>			
ACASIO, Laura		~			
GABBARD, Mike		<b>v</b>			
KIM, Donna Mercado		>			
LEE, Chris		V			
FEVELLA, Kurt		<u>v</u>			
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TOTAL		4	ତ	0	O
Recommendation: Not Adopted Not Adopted					
Chair's or Designee's Signature:					
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod   File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy					

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes