
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that one out of nine
2 persons living in Hawaii is limited English proficient. This
3 limitation is often a barrier that prevents persons with limited
4 English proficiency from accessing important benefits and
5 services, including access to health care and other public
6 benefits; essential information during public health
7 emergencies, pandemics, or natural disasters; and access to
8 earned benefits such as unemployment compensation or workers'
9 compensation.

10 The legislature further finds that the office of language
11 access was created in 2006 to address these language barriers
12 through central coordination, technical assistance, and
13 administration of a language access resource center for the
14 benefit of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of
15 state government. Where a government entity fails to provide
16 language access, the office of language access is only
17 authorized to eliminate the language barrier through informal



1 methods including conferences, conciliation, mediation, and
2 persuasion.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

4 (1) Require the office of language access to submit an
5 annual report to the governor and legislature
6 regarding compliance with state and federal language
7 access laws; and

8 (2) Appropriate funds to establish limited English
9 proficiency language coordinator positions in the
10 office of language access to work with all state
11 departments and agencies to ensure compliance with
12 state and federal language access laws.

13 SECTION 2. Chapter 321C, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
15 and to read as follows:

16 "§321C- Annual report. The executive director shall
17 submit an annual written report to the governor and legislature
18 no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular
19 session detailing compliance of state agencies and covered
20 entities with this chapter, complaints of noncompliance with



1 this chapter, resolution of any such complaints, and
2 recommendations to enhance and promote language access."

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for
6 the establishment of three full-time equivalent (3.00 FTE)
7 limited English proficiency language coordinator positions in
8 the office of language access to work with all state departments
9 and agencies to ensure compliance with all state and federal
10 language access laws.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of
12 language access for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2060.

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Report Title:

Office of Language Access; Annual Report; Limited English Proficiency Language Coordinator; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the executive director of the office of language access to submit an annual report to the governor and legislature on compliance, complaints, resolution of complaints, and recommendations to enhance and promote language access.

Appropriates funds to establish three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE) limited English proficiency language coordinator positions in the office of language access. Effective 7/1/2060. (HD1)

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