



**GOV. MSG. NO. 1351**

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

July 7, 2023

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate,  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on July 7, 2023, the following bill was signed into law:

SB813 SD1 HD2 CD1

RELATING TO COURT INTERPRETERS.  
**ACT 248**

Sincerely,

Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

on JUL 7 2023

THE SENATE  
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023  
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 813  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 2  
C.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO COURT INTERPRETERS.

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

1 SECTION 1. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of  
2 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,  
3 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the  
4 appropriations contained in H.B. No. 300, H.D. 1, S.D. 1,  
5 C.D. 1, and this Act will cause the state general fund  
6 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2023-2024 to be exceeded by  
7 \$1,063,787,367 or 11.0 per cent. This current declaration takes  
8 into account general fund appropriations authorized for fiscal  
9 year 2023-2024 in H.B. No. 300, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, C.D. 1, and this  
10 Act only. The reasons for exceeding the general fund  
11 expenditure ceiling are that:

- 12 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to  
13 serve the public interest; and
- 14 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs  
15 addressed by this Act.

16 SECTION 2. The legislature finds that court interpreters  
17 are independent contractors of the judiciary who play an  
18 integral role in the administration of justice in the State.



1 Hawaii has one of the largest populations of non-English  
2 speakers in the nation. The legislature further finds that  
3 court interpreters are often required to drive, sometimes for  
4 hours, to distant courthouses to provide interpretation services  
5 that are critical for a defendant with limited English  
6 proficiency to exercise the defendant's constitutional and  
7 statutory right to self-representation in court or assist  
8 counsel.

9 The legislature finds, however, that despite the  
10 substantial increase in the cost of living in Hawaii over the  
11 years, including considerable increases in the prices of  
12 automobiles and gasoline, the compensation for court  
13 interpreters has remained largely unchanged since it was  
14 established in 2007.

15 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the  
16 judiciary to conduct a study of interpreter fees and submit its  
17 findings and recommendations to the chief justice beginning in  
18 2026 and every three years thereafter.

19 SECTION 3. Chapter 606, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
20 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
21 and to read as follows:



1           "§606- Study for annual adjustments of fees for  
2 interpreters. Beginning in 2026 and every three years  
3 thereafter, the judiciary shall conduct a study of interpreter  
4 fees, including recommendations on adjustments to the fee rates,  
5 and submit its findings and recommendations to the chief justice  
6 for consideration."

7           SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$20,000 or so much  
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 to fund  
10 the study for annual adjustments of fees for interpreters  
11 pursuant to this Act.

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

14           SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

APPROVED this 7th day of July, 2023



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII



**THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI'I**

Date: May 4, 2023  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2023.

  
President of the Senate

  
Clerk of the Senate

SB No. 813, SD 1, HD 2, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: May 4, 2023  
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2023.



Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker  
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita  
Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives