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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD TO  
ESTABLISH AN AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER WORKFORCE  
WORKING GROUP TO PROMOTE INCREASING THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN  
SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS IN THE STATE.

1           WHEREAS, American Sign Language (ASL) is a distinct  
2 language with its own cultural heritage and language rules and  
3 structure; and

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5           WHEREAS, ASL interpreters provide a critical service to  
6 deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and hearing individuals and  
7 public agencies in the State who wish to effectively communicate  
8 with each other in a variety of settings and circumstances; and

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10          WHEREAS, the Disability and Communication Access Board  
11 notes there is an increased need statewide for communication  
12 access provided by ASL interpreters, as reflected in the number  
13 of requests made to local interpreter referral agencies; and

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15          WHEREAS, despite the increase in requests for ASL  
16 interpreting services, there is increased difficulty in the  
17 recruitment of individuals who are qualified to serve as ASL  
18 interpreters; and

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20          WHEREAS, to provide greater accessibility for individuals  
21 to receive ASL interpretation services in the State during  
22 emergencies and daily life activities, there is a critical need  
23 to develop an ASL interpreter workforce; now, therefore,

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25          BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
26 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
27 Session of 2023, that the Disability and Communication Access  
28 Board is requested to convene an American Sign Language  
29 Interpreter Workforce Working Group to promote increasing the  
30 number of American Sign Language interpreters in the State; and  
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested  
2 to recommend training and incentives to increase the number of  
3 ASL interpreters in the State; and  
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested  
6 to include the following members:  
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- 8 (1) A representative from the Disability and Communication  
9 Access Board, who shall serve as chairperson of the  
10 working group;
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- 12 (2) A representative from the Department of Education;
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- 14 (3) A representative from the Department of Human  
15 Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
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- 17 (4) A representative from the Department of Health's  
18 Office of Language Access;
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- 20 (5) A member of the Deaf and Blind Task Force;
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- 22 (6) A professor from the University of Hawaii who teaches  
23 ASL;
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- 25 (7) A senator selected by the President of the Senate;
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- 27 (8) A representative selected by the Speaker of the House  
28 of Representatives;
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- 30 (9) An individual who currently serves as an ASL  
31 interpreter; and
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- 33 (10) Any additional representatives invited by the  
34 chairperson of the working group; and  
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group, with the  
37 administrative assistance of the Department of Health, is  
38 requested to submit an interim report of its findings and  
39 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
40 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
41 the Regular Session of 2024 and a final report no later than



1 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of  
2 2026; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested  
5 to be dissolved on June 30, 2026; and

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
8 Resolution be transmitted to the Executive Director of the  
9 Disability and Communication Access Board, Executive Director of  
10 the Office of Language Access, Superintendent of Education,  
11 Administrator of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation,  
12 President of the University of Hawaii System, and Chair of the  
13 Deaf and Blind Task Force.

