

JAN 20 2023

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO COURT INTERPRETERS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that court interpreters  
2 are independent contractors of the judiciary, who play an  
3 integral role in the administration of justice in the State,  
4 which has one of the highest proportions of non-English speakers  
5 in the nation. The legislature further finds that court  
6 interpreters are often required to drive to distant courthouses,  
7 sometimes for hours, to provide interpretation services that are  
8 critical for a defendant with limited English proficiency in  
9 exercising their constitutional and statutory right to represent  
10 themselves in court or assist counsels in doing so.

11           The legislature finds however, that despite the substantial  
12 increase in the cost of living in Hawaii over the years,  
13 including the considerable increase in the price of automobiles  
14 and gasoline, the compensation for court interpreters has  
15 remained unchanged for the most part since it was established in  
16 2007. The legislature therefore finds that an increase in the  
17 fees and rates for court interpreters is overdue.



1           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the  
2 judiciary to increase the hourly fees, mileage reimbursement  
3 rate, and commuter-time compensation rate for court interpreters  
4 to reflect the significant increase in the cost of living in  
5 Hawaii.

6           SECTION 2. The judiciary shall amend its rules and  
7 policies governing compensation for court interpreters by:

8           (1) Increasing the hourly fees for court interpreters as  
9 follows:

- 10           (A) Tier 1 court interpreters from \$25 to \$40;
  - 11           (B) Tier 2 court interpreters from \$35 to \$50;
  - 12           (C) Tier 3 court interpreters from \$40 to \$60;
  - 13           (D) Tier 4 court interpreters from \$45 to \$70;
  - 14           (E) Tier 5 court interpreters from \$50 to \$80; and
  - 15           (F) Tier 6 court interpreters from \$55 to \$90;
- 16 provided that the hourly fees set forth in this  
17 paragraph shall be amended on July 1 of each year to  
18 reflect the increase in the State's consumer price  
19 index, as measured by the Honolulu consumer price  
20 index for the preceding year;



- 1 (2) Amending its mileage reimbursement rate to incorporate  
2 the annual standard mileage rate issued by the  
3 Internal Revenue Service each year; and  
4 (3) Amending its commuter-time compensation rate for court  
5 interpreters who travel one hundred fifty miles or  
6 more for one assignment to receive three-hours of  
7 their hourly fees as commuter-time compensation for  
8 that assignment.

9 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
11 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
12 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
13 year 2024-2025 to fund the increase in the hourly rates, mileage  
14 reimbursement rate, and commuter-time compensation rate for  
15 court interpreters pursuant to this Act.

16 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary  
17 for the purposes of this Act.

18 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

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INTRODUCED BY: *Francis X. Snodgrass*



# S.B. NO. 813

**Report Title:**

Court Interpreters; Hourly Fees; Mileage Reimbursement Rate; Commuter Compensation Rate; Judiciary; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Judiciary to increase the hourly fees, mileage reimbursement rate, and commuter-time compensation rate for court interpreters. Appropriates funds.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

