
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that at least a dozen
2 states have enacted laws that recognize American Sign Language,
3 or ASL, as a distinct language with its own rules, structure,
4 and cultural heritage. Act 152, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016,
5 which recognized ASL as a world language for public school
6 language requirement purposes, was an important first step, and
7 this Act aims to advance the understanding and acknowledgement
8 that ASL is a discrete language and not merely signed English.

9 The purpose of this Act is to recognize ASL as a fully
10 developed, autonomous, natural language with its own grammar,
11 syntax, vocabulary, and cultural heritage.

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
13 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
14 read as follows:

15 "§1- American Sign Language. American Sign Language is
16 recognized as a fully developed, autonomous, natural language



1 with its own distinct grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural
2 heritage."

3 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

4 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

5

INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 23 2023



H.B. NO. 834

Report Title:

Deaf and Blind Task Force; American Sign Language; Recognition

Description:

Recognizes American Sign Language as a fully developed, autonomous, natural language with its own grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural heritage.

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