
HOUSE CONCURRENT 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

4
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

9
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

14
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

19
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,

24
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, the Senate concurring, that the Disability and
28 Communication Access Board is requested to convene an American
29 Sign Language Interpreter Workforce Working Group to promote



1 increasing the number of American Sign Language interpreters in
2 the State; and

3
4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
5 to recommend training and incentives to increase the number of
6 ASL interpreters in the State; and

7
8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
9 to include the following members:

- 10
11 (1) A representative from the Disability and Communication
12 Access Board, who shall serve as chairperson of the
13 working group;
14
15 (2) A representative from the Department of Education;
16
17 (3) A representative from the Department of Human
18 Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
19
20 (4) A representative from the Department of Health's
21 Office of Language Access;
22
23 (5) A member of the Deaf and Blind Task Force;
24
25 (6) A professor from the University of Hawaii who teaches
26 ASL;
27
28 (7) A senator selected by the President of the Senate;
29
30 (8) A representative selected by the Speaker of the House
31 of Representatives;
32
33 (9) An individual who currently serves as an ASL
34 interpreter; and
35
36 (10) Any additional representatives invited by the
37 chairperson of the working group; and
38

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group, with the
40 administrative assistance of the Department of Health, is
41 requested to submit an interim report of its findings and
42 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the



1 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
2 the Regular Session of 2024 and a final report no later than
3 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
4 2026; and

5

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

8

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

