
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.



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

Report Title:

Court Interpreters; Study; Hourly Fees; Judiciary;
Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

Description:

Beginning in 2026 and every three years thereafter, requires the Judiciary to conduct a study on interpreter fees. Appropriates funds. (CD1)

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

