
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 Hawaii has one of the largest populations of non-English
5 speakers in the nation. The legislature further finds that
6 court interpreters are often required to drive, sometimes for
7 hours, to distant courthouses to provide interpretation services
8 that are critical for a defendant with limited English
9 proficiency to exercise the defendant's constitutional and
10 statutory right to self-representation in court or assist
11 counsel.

12 The legislature finds, however, that despite the
13 substantial increase in the cost of living in Hawaii over the
14 years, including considerable increases in the prices of
15 automobiles and gasoline, the compensation for court
16 interpreters has remained largely unchanged since it was
17 established in 2007. The legislature therefore finds that an



1 increase in the fees and rates for court interpreters is
2 overdue.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
4 judiciary to:

5 (1) Conduct a study of interpreter fees and submit its
6 findings and recommendations to the chief justice
7 beginning in 2026 and every three years thereafter;
8 and

9 (2) Increase the hourly fees, mileage reimbursement rate,
10 and commuter-time compensation rate for court
11 interpreters to reflect the significant increase in
12 the cost of living in Hawaii.

13 SECTION 2. Chapter 606, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
15 and to read as follows:

16 "§606- Study for annual adjustments of fees for
17 interpreters. Beginning in 2026 and every three years
18 thereafter, the judiciary shall conduct a study of interpreter
19 fees, including recommendations on adjustments to the fee rates,
20 and submit its findings and recommendations to the chief justice
21 for consideration."



1 SECTION 3. The judiciary shall amend its rules and
2 policies governing compensation for court interpreters by:

3 (1) Increasing the hourly fees for court interpreters as
4 follows:

5 (A) Tier 1 court interpreters from \$25 to
6 \$;

7 (B) Tier 2 court interpreters from \$35 to
8 \$;

9 (C) Tier 3 court interpreters from \$40 to
10 \$;

11 (D) Tier 4 court interpreters from \$45 to
12 \$;

13 (E) Tier 5 court interpreters from \$50 to
14 \$; and

15 (F) Tier 6 court interpreters from \$55 to
16 \$;

17 (2) Adjusting its mileage reimbursement rate based on the
18 Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate on
19 January 1 of each year; and

20 (3) Amending its commuter-time compensation rate for court
21 interpreters who travel one hundred fifty miles or



1 more for one assignment to receive three-hours of
2 their hourly fees as commuter-time compensation for
3 the assignment.

4 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
6 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
7 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
8 year 2024-2025 to fund the increase in the hourly fees, mileage
9 reimbursement rate, and commuter-time compensation rate for
10 court interpreters pursuant to this Act.

11 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary
12 for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on June 30, 3000.



Report Title:

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

Description:

Beginning in 2026 and every three years thereafter, requires the judiciary to conduct a study on interpreter fees. Requires the judiciary to increase the hourly fees, mileage reimbursement rate, and commuter-time compensation rate for court interpreters. Appropriates funds. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD2)

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

