

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 15 2023

RE: S.B. No. 813

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 813 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO COURT INTERPRETERS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Judiciary to increase the hourly fees, mileage reimbursement rate, and commuter-time compensation rate for court interpreters; and
- (2) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Office of Language Access, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Hawai'i, Supreme Court Committee on Court Interpreters and Language Access Subcommittee on Interpreters Fees, Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center, Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights, Hawai'i Coalition for Immigration Rights, Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, The Legal Clinic, Hawai'i Workers Center, and eleven individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds that court interpreters are independent contractors of the Judiciary, who play an integral role in the administration of justice in the State, which has one of the



highest proportions of non-English speakers in the nation. Your Committee further finds that court interpreters are often required to drive to distant courthouses, sometimes for hours, to provide interpretation services that are critical for a defendant with limited-English proficiency in exercising their constitutional and statutory right to represent themselves in court or assist counsels in doing so. However, despite the substantial increase in the cost of living in Hawaii over the years, including the considerable increase in the price of automobiles and gasoline, the compensation for court interpreters has remained unchanged for the most part since it was established in 2007. An increase in the fees and rates for court interpreters is overdue. This measure will ensure that court interpreters are paid fairly for their work.

Your Committee notes that this measure contains an unspecified appropriation amount, and respectfully requests that your Committee on Ways and Means consider inserting an appropriation amount of \$250,000.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 813 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Judiciary,



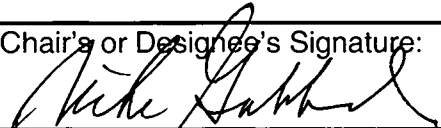
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KARL RHOADS, Chair



The Senate  
Thirty-Second Legislature  
State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Judiciary**  
**JDC**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 813</b>	Committee Referral: <b>JDC, WAM</b>	Date: <b>2/2/23</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
RHOADS, Karl (C)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike (VC)	✓			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C.	✓			
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.	✓			
AWA, Brenton	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	5	—	—	—
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes