
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that 'Olelo Hawaii is a
2 vital part of the heritage and culture of this state. The
3 Constitution of the State of Hawaii recognizes it as one of the
4 official languages in Hawaii, along with English. While
5 proficiency in English is of unquestioned importance when living
6 in Hawaii, basic understanding and knowledge of 'Olelo Hawaii
7 has lagged far behind. English is taught in every grade level
8 from kindergarten through twelfth grade, while 'Olelo Hawaii
9 does not receive nearly as much curriculum time. This is a
10 slight to the heritage of Native Hawaiians, as well as a
11 disservice to fostering a culture that reveres the past.

12 The legislature also finds there is a compelling state
13 interest in promoting the teaching and study of 'Olelo Hawaii in
14 public schools. There is an explicit provision in the
15 constitution of the state of Hawaii which reads "the State shall
16 promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history, and language.
17 The State shall provide for a Hawaiian education program



1 consisting of language, culture, and history in the public
2 schools."

3 The purpose of this Act is to require the Department of
4 Education to make 'Olelo Hawaii a required class in the public
5 school curriculum, and to submit a report to the legislature
6 with details regarding the implementation and status of the
7 program.

8 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
9 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart B, to be
10 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

11 **"§302A- Hawaiian language teaching; public schools.**

12 (a) Each public elementary, middle, and high school shall
13 include the teaching of Hawaiian language in its curriculum for
14 each grade level from kindergarten through twelfth grade, in the
15 same way that English is required and taught in each grade
16 level.

17 (b) The department shall submit a report to the
18 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
19 each regular session on the status of complying with subsection

20 (a). Reports shall include:



- 1 (1) The number of public schools currently teaching
- 2 Hawaiian language and the number of students receiving
- 3 Hawaiian language instruction;
- 4 (2) A schedule to implement the teaching of Hawaiian
- 5 language at all public elementary, middle, and high
- 6 schools;
- 7 (3) A summary of the Hawaiian language instruction
- 8 curriculum provided to students;
- 9 (4) The level of Hawaiian language proficiency students
- 10 have obtained as a result of the required Hawaiian
- 11 language instruction;
- 12 (5) Timely submitted commentary from the office of
- 13 Hawaiian affairs or the University of Hawaii at Manoa
- 14 regarding the curriculum and success of teaching
- 15 Hawaiian language at elementary, middle, and high
- 16 schools, if any;
- 17 (6) Requested funding, if any; and
- 18 (7) Recommendations and proposed legislation, if any."

19 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$5 million or so much
21 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 for the



1 purpose of creating and implementing a curriculum to teach
2 'Olelo Hawaii in public schools from kindergarten through
3 twelfth grade, and to hire the appropriate number of teachers to
4 effectively implement this program.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Department of
6 Education for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

8 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval
9 and shall apply commencing the 2023-2024 public school year.

10

INTRODUCED BY:


JAN 17 2023



H.B. NO. 157

Report Title:

Hawaiian Language; DOE; Public Schools

Description:

Requires the Department of Education to each Hawaiian Language to students in each public elementary, middle, and high school.

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