STAND. COM. REP. NO. 405

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 17 2023 RE: S.B. No. 610

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 610 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to recognize American Sign Language as a fully developed, autonomous, natural language with its own grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural heritage.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, Disability and Communication Access Board, Hawaii Disability Rights Center, and eight individuals.

Your Committee finds that over forty states recognize American Sign Language (ASL) in varying degrees, with at least a dozen states enacting laws to acknowledge ASL as its own distinct language. Your Committee believes ASL is a prominent language that serves as the backbone of the United States' deaf and hard-of-hearing population, including residents of Hawaii. Your Committee further finds that recognizing ASL as a distinct language will allow more equitable access in numerous areas, including employment, public awareness, and civic participation. Therefore, this measure aims to advance public understanding and recognition that ASL is a discrete language with its own grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural heritage.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health and Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 610 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

JOY A.

SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair

## The Senate Thirty-Second Legislature State of Hawaiʻi

## Record of Votes Committee on Health and Human Services HHS

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:			Date:	
SB 610	HHS, J	TDC		2/8/23	
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.  If so, then the previous decision was to:					
The Recommendation is:					
Pass, unamended Pass, with amendments Hold Recommit 2312 2311 2310 2313					
Members		Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A. (C)		<b>V</b>			
AQUINO, Henry J.C. (VC)		<b>\</b>			
MORIWAKI, Sharon Y.		<b>✓</b>			
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L.					
AWA, Brenton		/			
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TOTAL		9			
Recommendation:  Adopted  Not Adopted					
Chair's or Designee's Signature:					
<b>Distribution:</b> Original File with Committee Re	Yellow port Clerk's Office D		Pink Drafting Agency	Goldenrod Committee File Copy	

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes