

---

---

# 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 at the  
2 Constitutional Convention of Hawaii of 1978, the committee on  
3 Hawaiian affairs proposed the constitutional amendment that is  
4 now enshrined in article XV, section 4, of the Hawaii State  
5 Constitution, which establishes Hawaiian as an official language  
6 of the State. The committee felt it necessary to include this  
7 amendment in the constitution "to give full recognition and  
8 honor to the rich cultural inheritance that Hawaiians have given  
9 to all ethnic groups of the State."

10           The legislature further finds that passage of this Act  
11 would contribute to the growing international movement for the  
12 protection of the rights of the world's indigenous peoples. In  
13 2007, the United Nations adopted the United Nations Declaration  
14 on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In 2011, the United States  
15 became a signatory on the Declaration. Article 13 of the  
16 Declaration states:



1 "1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use,  
2 develop and transmit to future generations their  
3 histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies,  
4 writing systems and literatures, and to designate and  
5 retain their own names for communities, places and  
6 persons.

7 2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that  
8 this right is protected and also to ensure that  
9 indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in  
10 political, legal and administrative proceedings, where  
11 necessary through the provision of interpretation or  
12 by other appropriate means."

13 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require that the  
14 Hawaiian version of a law be held binding if the law in question  
15 was originally drafted in Hawaiian and then translated into  
16 English.

17 SECTION 2. Section 1-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
18 amended to read as follows:

19 "§1-13 Official languages. English and Hawaiian are the  
20 official languages of Hawaii. Whenever there is found to exist  
21 any radical and irreconcilable difference between the English



# H.B. NO. 304

1 and Hawaiian version of any of the laws of the State, the  
2 English version shall be held binding[-]; provided that if the  
3 law in question was originally drafted in Hawaiian and the  
4 English version was translated based on the Hawaiian version,  
5 the Hawaiian version shall be held binding. Hawaiian shall not  
6 be required for public acts and transactions."

7 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
8 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

10

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 16 2025



# H.B. NO. 304

**Report Title:**

Hawaiian Language; State Law; Public Documents

**Description:**

Requires that the Hawaiian version of a law be held binding if the law in question was originally drafted in Hawaiian and then translated into English.

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

