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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO LANGUAGE ACCESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that language access is  
2 essential to ensuring equitable access to education, healthcare,  
3 legal services, agriculture, emergency and other government  
4 programs for Hawaii's diverse communities. Hawaii's large  
5 multilingual population requires a trained and culturally  
6 competent workforce of translators and interpreters.

7 The legislature commends the department of education for  
8 recognizing high school graduates with the seal of biliteracy.  
9 These students who have demonstrated proficiency in English and  
10 at least one additional language represent a valuable pipeline  
11 for meeting the State's language access and workforce needs.

12 The legislature further finds that providing a structured  
13 pathway, including training and paid internship opportunities,  
14 would develop qualified bilingual workers to strengthen  
15 workforce development, expand language access services, and  
16 create meaningful career opportunities.



1       The legislature also finds that this issue is a matter of  
2       statewide concern pursuant to article X, section 6, of the  
3       Hawaii State Constitution.

4       Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to establish a  
5       program that enables eligible high school graduates who have  
6       earned the seal of biliteracy and members of the community with  
7       demonstrated biliteral competency to be recognized as qualified  
8       translators and interpreters.

9       SECTION 2. (a) There is established at the university of  
10      Hawaii the language access education and workforce development  
11      program to provide a curriculum to train eligible participants  
12      to be recognized as qualified translators and interpreters.

13       (b) The curriculum of the language access education and  
14      workforce development program shall provide training in  
15      translation and interpretation, including ethics, standards, and  
16      best practices.

17       (c) Participants in the language access education and  
18      workforce development program shall complete educational  
19      requirements, including internship opportunities through the  
20      hele imua program of the department of labor and industrial  
21      relations.



6 (e) Participants who have successfully completed the  
7 curriculum and met the requirements of the language access  
8 education and workforce development program shall receive a  
9 certificate of completion and shall be recognized as qualified  
10 in translation and interpretation proficiency.

11 (f) The language access education and workforce  
12 development program shall be provided statewide and shall be  
13 administered by the university of Hawaii in collaboration with  
14 the department of education, the department of labor and  
15 industrial relations, and other relevant public and private  
16 entities.

17 (g) The language access education and workforce  
18 development program shall be administered by the SEED office of  
19 the university of Hawaii at Manoa in cooperation with academic  
20 departments of the university of Hawaii at Manoa and all  
21 campuses of the university of Hawaii system.



1 (h) Priority for acceptance into the language access  
2 education and workforce development program shall be given to  
3 students who have received the seal of biliteracy from the  
4 department of education.

5 Other applicants to the program shall demonstrate  
6 proficiency in English and at least one additional language, as  
7 determined by:

8 (1) Standards developed by the language access education  
9 and workforce development program; or  
10 (2) Testing through the Global Seal of Biliteracy program.

11 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
13 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for  
14 the language access education and workforce development program  
15 established by section 2 of this Act, including for full-  
16 time equivalent ( FTE) positions.

17 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the university of  
18 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

**19** SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Filipino Caucus; Language Access Education and Workforce Development Program; University of Hawaii; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a statewide language access education and workforce development program at the University of Hawaii. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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