
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO DEAF INDIVIDUALS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the dangers
2 associated with a routine traffic stop can increase if a law
3 enforcement officer is not aware that the driver is deaf. A
4 deaf driver's failure to respond to verbal commands or an
5 officer's misinterpretation of a deaf individual's gestures can
6 lead to undesired outcomes.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to prevent
8 miscommunication between deaf drivers and law enforcement
9 officers by providing law enforcement officers with a
10 notification that a driver is deaf when the officer conducts an
11 electronic check of the motor vehicle's registration.

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 286, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended by adding a new section to part III to be appropriately
14 designated and to read as follows:

15 "§286- Deaf owner; registration. (a) Upon application
16 by a motor vehicle owner who is deaf, the director of finance of
17 the county where the vehicle is to be operated shall add a



1 designation to the registration of the motor vehicle bearing the
2 international symbol for deafness or a numerical code
3 designating deafness.

4 (b) The deafness designation shall appear when a law
5 enforcement officer accesses the motor vehicle's information and
6 shall be used to alert the law enforcement officer that the
7 owner of the motor vehicle is deaf.

8 (c) Except as provided by subsection (b), the director of
9 finance of the county where the vehicle is to be operated shall
10 restrict access to the vehicle owner's deafness designation, as
11 required by law.

12 (d) For the purposes of this section, "deaf" means a
13 person whose average loss in the speech frequencies (500-2000
14 Hertz) in the better ear is eighty-two decibels, A.S.A., or
15 worse. The impairment of deafness shall be:

- 16 (1) Certified by a qualified otolaryngologist or an
17 audiologist licensed under chapter 468E; or
18 (2) Demonstrated by presenting a copy of the individual's
19 most recent filed income tax forms as referenced in
20 the definition of the term "deaf" under section
21 235-1."



- 1 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.
- 2 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2027.



S.B. NO. 2851
S.D. 1

Report Title:

Deaf; Hearing Impaired; Disability; Motor Vehicle Registration;
Law Enforcement

Description:

Authorizes deaf motor vehicle owners to register their vehicle as being owned by a deaf individual so that a deafness designation appears when a law enforcement officer accesses the motor vehicle's information. Effective 1/1/2027. (SD1)

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