

Honolulu, Hawaii
, 2026

FEB 11

RE: H.B. No. 2617
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Higher Education, to which was referred
H.B. No. 2617 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT
HILO,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish the Institute of Indigenous Education,
Science, and Outreach within the University of Hawaii at
Hilo;
- (2) Authorize the Hawaiian Language College Revolving Fund
to include monies from any revenue source and requires
expenditures in the fund to be used to support the
Imiloa Astronomy Center;
- (3) Require the Hawaiian Early Learning Trust Fund to
support the Hawaiian-Language-Medium Education Pathway;
- (4) Prohibit the University of Hawaii from limiting the
amount of revenue deposited into the Hawaiian Language
College Revolving Fund and the Hawaiian Early Learning
Trust Fund; and



- (5) Establish a cap on individual deposits into the Hawaiian Language College Revolving Fund and the Hawaiian Early Learning Trust Fund.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and one individual.

Your Committee finds that strengthening the Hawaiian-language-medium education pathway is essential to addressing the State's shortage of qualified Hawaiian-language-medium early education teachers. This measure will help advance a comprehensive, culturally grounded approach to indigenous language revitalization and science education.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the individual deposit cap amount for the Hawaiian Language College Revolving Fund and Hawaiian Early Learning Trust Fund to unspecified amounts;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2617, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2617, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Higher Education,



ANDREW TAKUYA GARRETT, Chair



