

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 31 , 2026

RE: H.R. No. 114

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.R. No. 114 entitled:

"HOUSE RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO  
ALLOW AN OLELO HAWAII PATHWAY UNDER THE NIIHAU DIALECT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to request the University of  
Hawaii to allow an Olelo Hawaii Pathway under the Niihau dialect.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure  
from one individual. Your Committee received comments on this  
measure from the University of Hawai'i System.

Your Committee finds that native speakers of the Niihau  
dialect come from a genealogy of continuous use of Hawaiian as  
their primary language of cognition and the isolation of the  
Niihau community has allowed Olelo Niihau to flourish as its own  
dialect that is significantly distinct from the Olelo Hawaii  
commonly found in immersion schools and mainstream educational  
settings. The level of competence which native speakers of Olelo  
Niihau possess is a testament to the formidable instinct of the  
Niihau community to preserve their connection to the Hawaiian  
language of their ancestors.

Your Committee also finds, however, that emerging external  
pressure to integrate new linguistic characteristics produced by



new speakers of the Hawaiian language on to the Niihau community, especially Niihau youth, risks attrition of Olelo Niihau by interpolation. Furthermore, while Hawaiian language initiatives from outside of the Niihau community have enjoyed the support of legislation and policy, the specific linguistic needs of the Niihau community have been ignored or dismissed. This measure seeks to preserve and maintain Olelo Niihau as the unique marker of identity and the proud heritage of the Niihau community.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.R. No. 114 and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

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



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ANDREW TAKUYA GARRETT, Chair



