

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2350

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 18 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2412
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Education and Health and Human Services,
to which was referred S.B. No. 2412 entitled:

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

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds to establish a bachelor's degree program in American Sign Language interpretation at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa campus with a multi-year plan to include a master's degree program for interpreter training.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Disability and Communication Access Board, State Health Planning and Development Agency, Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, Hawaii Interpreting Services, Hawai'i Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, and fourteen individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the University of Hawai'i System.

Your Committees find that the State is experiencing a shortage of qualified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters that is perpetuated by a lack of ASL interpreter training programs. Qualified interpreters are essential for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to fully participate in education,



health care, employment, and civic life. The scarcity of qualified ASL interpreters infringes on these individuals' fundamental civil right to language access and perpetuates systemic barriers that contribute to inequality. Your Committees further note that Hawaii is one of only eight States that does not have an ASL interpreter training program. This measure invests in equity and inclusion by establishing a sustainable, in-state interpreter workforce pipeline.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting a blank appropriation amount; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committees note that although this measure, as amended, contains an unspecified appropriation amount, should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committees respectfully request that it consider inserting an appropriation amount of \$140,000 to establish a bachelor's degree program in American Sign Language interpretation at the University of Hawaii at Manoa campus, develop a multi-year plan to include a master's degree program, and provide necessary personnel and administrative resources for the programs.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Education and Health and Human Services that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2412, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2412, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Education and
Health and Human Services,

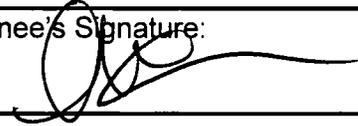

JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair


DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Health and Human Services
HHS

Bill / Resolution No.:* SB 2412	Committee Referral: EDU/HHS, WAM	Date: 2/11/26		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A. (C)	✓			
MCKELVEY, Angus L.K. (VC)	✓			
KANUHA, Dru Mamo	✓			
KEOHOKALOLE, Jarrett	✓			
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
TOTAL	5	0	0	0
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes