

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1355

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 21 , 2023

RE: S.B. No. 813  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred S.B. No. 813, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO COURT INTERPRETERS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the Judiciary to increase the hourly fees, reimbursement rate, and commuter-time compensation rate for court interpreters to reflect the significant increase in the cost of living in Hawaii.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Supreme Court Committee on Court Interpreters and Language Access: Subcommittee on Interpreter Fees, Office of Language Access, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Hawai'i, The Legal Clinic, Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights, and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds court interpreters provide essential language services to ensure access to justice for court users with limited English proficiency. Your Committee believes that court interpreters should be paid fairly for their highly specialized field of work.

2023-2627 SB813 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Beginning in 2026 and every three years thereafter, requiring the Judiciary to conduct a study on interpreter fees, including the impact of changes to the State's consumer price index and recommendations on adjustments to the fee rates, and submit its findings and recommendations to the Chief Justice for consideration;
- (2) Clarifying that the mileage reimbursement rate be adjusted based on the Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate on January 1 of each year; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee notes that this measure provides for an annual increase of the interpreter hourly fees reflecting the increase in the consumer price index. Your Committee further notes, however, that the Judiciary will need a corresponding appropriation each year to fulfill those annual increases.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$300,000.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 813, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 813, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Judiciary &  
Hawaiian Affairs,



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DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



