

MAR 12 2012

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO INCORPORATE
AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE INTO THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM
AND ENCOURAGING SIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS TO ASSIST
STUDENTS WITH LEARNING CHALLENGES IN THE CLASSROOM.

1 WHEREAS, sign language is a powerful communications tool
2 for children with hearing or speech disorders, autism spectrum
3 disorders, dyslexia, specific language impairments, Down
4 syndrome, or other disability; and

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6 WHEREAS, in addition, studies have demonstrated that sign
7 language can promote improved literacy and language skills even
8 for children without hearing or speech disorders and can help
9 older children who struggle with reading; and

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11 WHEREAS, federal regulations adopted in 2011 pursuant to
12 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of
13 2004 eliminated the requirement that a disabled infant or
14 toddler be deaf or hearing-impaired to receive sign language
15 instruction and interpreter services under public early
16 intervention programs; and

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18 WHEREAS, older children with disabilities would greatly
19 benefit from similar expanded access to sign language services
20 in academic settings; now, therefore,

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22 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth
23 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2012,
24 that the state Department of Education is requested to
25 incorporate American Sign Language into the public school
26 curriculum; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addition to helping students
29 with hearing or speech disorders, sign language instructors in



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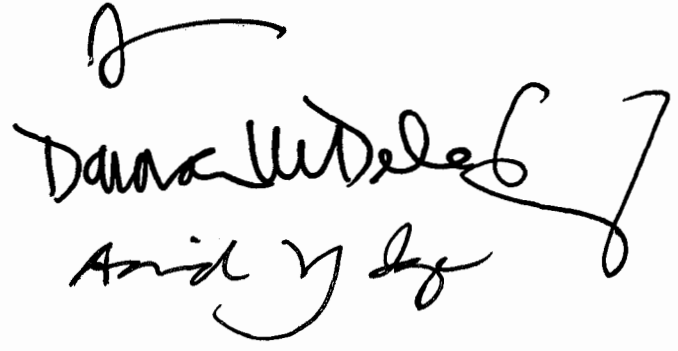
1 Hawaii's schools are encouraged to serve as interpreters for
2 other students facing learning challenges in the classroom; and
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
5 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
6 Education, the Superintendent of Education, the President of the
7 Hawaii State Teachers Association, and the President and Chief
8 Executive Officer of Easter Seals Hawaii.
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