



Proclamation

Hawai'i's strength lies in its diversity, with people from a variety of cultures contributing their voices to the public discourse for the common good. Like the famed Rosetta Stone of Egypt that helped bridge the barriers between languages, the state is working toward the goal of making sure all those voices can be heard and understood.

The Aloha state has been on the forefront of removing that barrier through Hawai'i's language access bill, which the Administration signed into law as Act 290 during the 2006 legislative session. It ensures that residents with limited English proficiency have access to the government services they need at no extra charge.

More than 12 percent of Hawai'i residents speak English "less than very well," according to the 2000 U.S. Census. Members of this segment of the population face daily challenges, whether it is struggling to consult with a counselor about their child's performance at school or seeking medical assistance for their family.

In requiring every state agency and state-funded organization to "take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to services, programs and activities by limited English proficient persons," the law provides a means for this population to become self-sufficient and productive members of the community.

It is particularly fitting in a state with two official languages – English and Hawaiian – that we should be taking the lead on this issue and working toward improving quality of life for every resident of the state, no matter what language they speak.

THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR., Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim **September 2008**, as

LANGUAGE ACCESS MONTH

in Hawai'i, and urge all citizens to support efforts to eliminate language barriers in our state and ensure equal access to government services for everyone.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this twentieth day of August 2008.

Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai'i

James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i