

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1089

Expressing support for the designation of February 2026 as “Hawaiian Language Month” or “‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

Ms. TOKUDA (for herself, Mr. CASE, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Ms. MENG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the designation of February 2026 as “Hawaiian Language Month” or “‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month”.

Whereas the Hawaiian language, or ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i—

(1) is the Native language of Native Hawaiians, the aboriginal, Indigenous people who—

(A) settled the Hawaiian archipelago as early as 300 A.D., over which they exercised sovereignty; and

(B) over time, founded the Kingdom of Hawai‘i; and

(2) was once widely spoken by Native Hawaiians and non-Native Hawaiians throughout the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, which held one of the highest literacy rates in the world prior to the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i in 1893 and the establishment of the Republic of Hawai‘i;

Whereas the Republic of Hawai‘i enacted a law in 1896 effectively banning school instructional use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, a law which continued to be in effect over the generations-long territorial period;

Whereas the Republic of Hawai‘i banned the use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i to communicate and punished children for speaking ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in schools and on the play ground;

Whereas parallel to the Federal efforts to eliminate Native American languages spoken by Indian Tribes, the ban on the use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i led to the near extinction of the language by the 1980s when fewer than 50 fluent speakers under 18 years old remained;

Whereas, since the 1960s, Native Hawaiians have led a grassroots revitalization of their Native language, launching a number of historic initiatives, including—

(1) the Hawaiian language course and degree programs throughout the University of Hawai‘i system;

(2) the statewide Hawaiian language immersion preschools created by the Native Hawaiian non-profit ‘Aha Pūnana Leo, combining speakers and non-speakers in language nests;

(3) the Hawaiian State Department of Education Hawaiian Language immersion program developed from a base of ‘Aha Pūnana Leo graduates; and

(4) the State Hawaiian language college’s research regarding Indigenous language immersion teacher training, curriculum materials, and best practices, which allowed the State to develop an integrated preschool through doctorate Hawaiian immersion program;

Whereas the Hawaiian language revitalization movement inspired systemic Native language policy reform, including—

(1) the State of Hawai‘i recognizing ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i as an official language in the Constitution of the State of Hawai‘i in 1978;

(2) the State of Hawai‘i removing the 90-year ban on teaching ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in public and private schools in 1986;

(3) the bipartisan enactment of the Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.) in 1990, which established the policy of the United States to preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages; and

(4) the State of Hawai‘i designating the month of February as “‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month” to celebrate and encourage the use of the Hawaiian language;

Whereas the enactment of the Native American Language Resource Center Act of 2022 (20 U.S.C. 7457) in 2023—

(1) reconfirmed a Federal commitment to revitalizing Indigenous languages, including the Hawaiian language; and

(2) resulted in the Department of Education awarding the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo a 5-year grant to establish the first National Native American Language Resource Center with State and Tribal Colleges and University partners to support the revitalization of other Native American languages using expertise and best practices;

Whereas Congress, over many decades, enacted numerous statutes to promote education, Native language revitalization, and cultural preservation, recognizing and imple-

menting the special political and trust responsibility with the Native Hawaiian community;

Whereas sustained community-led and public efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language have produced measurable and historic outcomes, including—

- (1) increasing the number of Native Hawaiian speakers to more than 20,000 individuals;
- (2) expanding and popularizing Hawaiian language immersion education, with enrollment increasing by more than 60 percent over the past decade; and
- (3) compelling the State of Hawai‘i to expand the number of public Hawaiian language immersion school campuses from 14 in 2016 to 26 in 2026; and

Whereas, notwithstanding these significant advancements and the demonstrated vitality of Native Hawaiian intellectual and cultural excellence, the Trump administration, during its second term, has undertaken actions that threaten the continued vitality and sustainability of the Hawaiian language and Hawaiian-serving educational institutions, including—

- (1) the elimination of discretionary funding for multiple Minority-Serving Institution grant programs, resulting in the loss of approximately \$83,000,000 in support for the University of Hawai‘i and the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies;
- (2) attempts to transfer the Native Hawaiian Education Program and the Native Hawaiian Education Council from the Department of Education to the Department of the Interior, contrary to clear congressional intent that such programs remain education-centered and administered with the Department of Education;

(3) the discontinuation of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, which had coordinated the efforts of dozens of Federal agencies to address persistent disparities affecting Native Hawaiian communities; and

(4) actions that have encouraged and amplified legal and political attacks on Native Hawaiian-serving programs and institutions, including litigation aimed at ending the Kamehameha Schools admissions practices designed to address historical injustices and support Native Hawaiian students, thereby jeopardizing culturally relevant educational environments and language revitalization efforts, and reflecting a broader, coordinated effort to roll back diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and affirmative action initiatives nationwide: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports the designation of “Hawaiian Lan-
3 guage Month” or “‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month”;

4 (2) commits to preserving, protecting, and pro-
5 moting the use, practice, and development of ‘Ōlelo
6 Hawai‘i in alignment with the Native American Lan-
7 guages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.); and

8 (3) urges the people of the United States and
9 interested groups to celebrate ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month
10 with appropriate activities and programs to dem-
11 onstrate support for ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i.

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