HB 1883 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO ELECTIONS

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and members of the committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1883 HD1 SD1. The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 1883 HD1 SD1 that proposes to require instructions on ballots on how to obtain language translation services in Hawaiian.

UH Hilo is home to Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani, College of Hawaiian Language, that has been leading efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language while also serving as a model to national and international Indigenous communities who also seek to revive their endangered languages. The college has translation expertise among faculty, M.A. and Ph.D students and the Hale Kuamoʻo Hawaiian Language Center at UH Hilo.

Having election materials available in Hawaiian is an important commitment to promoting Hawaiian and serving Hawaiian speakers. It also assures the some 3,600 students presently enrolled in schools and programs taught through Hawaiian that the state values their distinctive commitment to use the states Indigenous official language.

Mahalo for allowing UH Hilo to testify on this issue.