

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Designating February 2026 as “Hawaiian Language Month” or “‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Ms. HIRONO) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Designating 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
2,000 years ago, over which they exercised sov-
ereignty; 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 that continued 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 playground;

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 Hawaiian 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 through the University of Hawai'i system;

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

(3) the Hawai'i State Department of Education Hawaiian language immersion program developed from a base of 'Aha Pūnana Leo graduates; and

(4) the research conducted by the Hawaiian language college at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo relating to Indigenous language immersion teacher training, curriculum materials, and best practices, which allowed the State of Hawai'i 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 through a majority vote of its Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian citizenry 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, including the Native Hawaiian language; 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 Native American languages, including the Hawaiian language; and

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

Whereas the enactment of numerous laws by Congress over many decades to promote education, Native American language revitalization, and cultural preservation recognizes and implements the special political and trust relationship with the Native Hawaiian Community: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates February 2026 as “Hawaiian
3 Language 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.