

# COUNTY OF HAWAI‘I

## *Proclamation*

**WHEREAS** language is a verbal expression of cultural beliefs, memories, and traditions and is the foundation for Indigenous peoples; and

**WHEREAS**, like many indigenous languages around the world, ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i has a history of suppression and became an endangered language, with generations of young people denied access to their cultural heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, without Hawaiian expression, the Hawaiian way of thriving as a lāhui was dramatically disrupted, leading to cultural conflict and despair, causing loss of cultural and health practices; and

**WHEREAS**, in the 1970s, the Hawaiian language revitalization movement began, with focus on linguistic immersion and education to re-engage what was lost. With perseverance, determination, and mana instilled by their kūpuna, the leaders of the movement nurtured our endangered language to strengthen and grow; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2012, with an amendment to the Hawai‘i Revised Statutes §8-24, ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was recognized as one of two official state languages in Hawai‘i, and provided that the month of February be designated as ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i Month; and

**WHEREAS**, this measure was the first Act to be codified in Hawaiian and English and states: “Mahina ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i: E ‘ike mau a e kapa ‘ia ana a‘e ka mahina ‘o Pepeluali ‘o ia ka ‘Mahina ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i’ i mea e ho‘omaika‘i a e paipai aku ai i ka ‘ōlelo ‘ana o ua ‘ōlelo Makuahine nei lā”; and

**WHEREAS** linguistic education is seen as a vital part of a broader cultural revitalization; today there are 12 Pūnana Leo preschools and 21 Hawaiian immersion and Hawaiian medium education schools statewide. The University of Hawai‘i system offers college degrees in Hawaiian Language and Hawaiian medium education, and the Hawaiian Duolingo course was launched in 2018.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, MITCHELL D. ROTH, Mayor of the County of Hawai‘i, do hereby proclaim the month of **FEBRUARY 2022**, as

### **MAHINA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I**

in the County of Hawai‘i and celebrate and encourage the use of the Hawaiian language through which we perpetuate the culture of our ‘āina.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused The Seal of the County of Hawai‘i to be affixed. Done this 9<sup>th</sup> day of February 2022, in Hilo, Hawai‘i.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mitchell D. Roth".

MITCHELL D. ROTH  
MAYOR