Proclamation

WHEREAS, indigenous languages are central to the identity of indigenous peoples and are crucial to the protection of their fundamental human rights, peace, reconciliation, literacy, diversity, heritage, understanding of the environment and sustainable development; and

WHEREAS, indigenous languages are cultural treasures, representing complex systems of knowledge developed and accumulated over thousands of years; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations General Assembly has declared 2019 the International Year of Indigenous Languages as part of an effort to draw attention to the critical loss of indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote indigenous languages and to take further urgent steps at the national and international levels; and

WHEREAS, there are about 7,000 languages spoken worldwide today, and conservative estimates suggest more than half of the world's languages will become extinct by the year 2100; and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to preserve, promote and revitalize endangered indigenous languages around the world; and

WHEREAS, the State of Hawai'i leads by example with the preservation of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, the indigenous language of the Hawaiian Islands; and

WHEREAS, the 1978 Hawai'i State Constitutional Convention designated 'Ōlelo Hawai'i as an official state language, making Hawai'i the only state in the nation that has designated a native language as one of its two official state languages; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, the State Department of Education established the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program, Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i, and today, 23 K-12 schools deliver instruction exclusively in Hawaiian until grade 5 whereupon English is formally introduced; and

WHEREAS, Hawaiian Language immersion programs have brought the Hawaiian language back from the brink of extinction to a thriving language now spoken by over 20,000 individuals;

THEREFORE I, DAVID Y. IGE, Governor, and **I, JOSHUA B. GREEN**, **Lieutenant Governor** of the **State of Hawai'i,** do hereby proclaim 2019 as

"YEAR OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES"

in Hawai'i and ask the people of the Aloha State to join us in upholding the spirit of the International Year of Indigenous Languages and recognize the value of Native Hawaiian language restoration and revitalization.

Done at the State Capitol, in Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this first day of February 2019.

JOSHUA B. GREEN
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor, State of Hawai'i