

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1123

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 18 2025

RE: H.B. No. 596
H.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 596, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to clarify the types of events that constitute disasters and emergencies for the purposes of emergency management.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from The Maritime Group, Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, and one individual.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency.

Your Committee finds that the State faces a unique set of challenges relating to emergency management. Due to the location of the State, it is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanic activity. Additionally, the growing risks associated with climate change, extreme weather events, disease outbreaks, and potential human-caused incidents underscore the need for a robust and clearly defined emergency management framework.



Your Committee further finds that the statutory definitions of "disaster" and "emergency" require refinement and clarification to address the evolving understanding of the safety threats faced by the State. This measure will address this issue by providing clearer legal definitions of the types of events that constitute disasters and emergencies for the purposes of emergency management, ensuring consistency in how disasters and emergencies are classified and managed, and reducing ambiguity in response protocols.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 596, H.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Public Safety and
Military Affairs,



BRANDON J.C. ELEFANTE, Chair



Record of Votes
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
PSM

*Only one measure per Record of Votes