

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1208

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 13 , 2025

RE: S.B. No. 281
S.D. 1
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness, to which was referred S.B. No. 281, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TORTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish the offense of torture as a class A felony in the State.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu; Office of the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Hawai'i; Honolulu Police Department; Hawaiian Islands Republican Women; Kulia i Ka Nu'u; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Office of the Public Defender.

Your Committee finds that existing criminal laws in the State fail to sufficiently address extreme acts of cruelty and sadistic abuse, leaving gaps in legal protections for vulnerable individuals, including children and adults. This measure establishes torture as a class A felony, ensuring that perpetrators of severe physical and psychological abuse face appropriate legal consequences.

2025-2512 SB281 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Including the act of knowingly depriving a minor or vulnerable person of necessary food, water, or clothing as an act that can constitute the offense of torture;
- (2) Defining "deprives";
- (3) Clarifying the definition of "vulnerable person"; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 281, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 281, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services &
Homelessness,



LISA MARTEN, Chair



