

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2335

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 2024

RE: S.B. No. 2556
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 2556 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH COURT,"
begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to permanently establish and appropriate moneys for the Community Outreach Court as a division of the District Court of the First Circuit.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Department of Law Enforcement, Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions, Office of the Public Defender, Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center, ACLU of Hawai'i, and National Alliance on Mental Illness Hawaii.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu.

Your Committee finds that many homeless persons who receive citations for nonviolent crimes are unable to attend court or have misplaced their paperwork due to the transient and unstable nature of homelessness, which leaves the courts no option but to issue a bench warrant. Bench warrants can be traumatic for the defendant and expends law enforcement officers' time and resources. To help address this, the Judiciary, Office of the Public Defender, and



Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu established a Community Outreach Court project to make court appearances more accessible to homeless persons. Since its inception, the program has addressed more than ten thousand cases, recalled more than nine hundred bench warrants, lifted more than six thousand driver license stoppers, and assisted more than six hundred participants with social services or referrals. This program removes some of the many barriers that homeless people face when trying to secure basic necessities such as employment, income assistance, and housing.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the Community Outreach Court shall foster cooperation between the prosecuting attorney and the public defender, not a defense attorney, to resolve cases;
- (2) Deleting language that would have required the Supreme Court to adopt rules regarding the administration, operation, and procedures of the Community Outreach Court; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2556, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2556, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Second Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Judiciary
JDC

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 2556	JDC, WAM	02/01/24

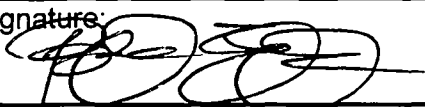
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
 If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312 Pass, with amendments 2311 Hold 2310 Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
RHOADS, Karl (C)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike (VC)	✓			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C.	✓			
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.	✓			
AWA, Brenton	✓			
TOTAL	5	0	0	0

Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature: 

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*Only one measure per Record of Votes