

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

246

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 06 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 1324
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 Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 1324 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LANDLORD-TENANT DISPUTES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to increase access to representation for residential tenants in actions or proceedings for possession by:

- (1) Providing for state-funded access to legal services for residential tenants;
- (2) Authorizing attorneys, paralegals, and law students to provide the legal services; and
- (3) Appropriating funds to the Judiciary to contract with legal service organizations or clinical training programs to carry out this purpose.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice and four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Judiciary and Department of Attorney General.

2025-1465 HB1324 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that providing legal representation for tenants facing eviction is crucial. It helps level the playing field against landlords, significantly increases the chances of a positive outcome for tenants, and can prevent the devastating consequences of eviction, including homelessness. This measure will ensure that Hawaii's low-income tenants have a fair opportunity to protect their housing rights.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Amending the definition of "eligible residential tenant" to:
 - (A) Delete language that would have included tenants of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority; and
 - (B) Change the income threshold to persons whose household earns at or below two hundred fifty percent of the applicable federal poverty level for Hawaii;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) 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 Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1324, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1324, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary &
Hawaiian Affairs,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Tarnas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



