

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 27 2025

RE: S.B. No. 353  
S.D. 2

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B.  
No. 353, S.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 state and county emergency management authority, ensure effective and adaptable emergency responses, and further the goals of transparency and democratic accountability within the State's constitutional system.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the League of Women Voters of Hawaii, Hawaii Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, Public First Law Center, Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, Libertarian Party of Hawaii, and four individuals.

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

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of Information Practices.

Your Committee finds that public records laws are a critical mechanism to ensure government transparency. Your Committee believes that the suspension of these laws during a state of



emergency undermines public trust in the workings of government at a time when trust is needed most. This measure will seek to safeguard the promise of openness for the public during government-declared emergencies, when transparency is especially crucial.

Your Committee has amended this measure by making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment 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. 353, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 353, S.D. 2.

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



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KARL RHOADS, Chair



The Senate  
Thirty-Third Legislature  
State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Judiciary**  
**JDC**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 353 SD1</b>	Committee Referral: <b>PSM, JDC</b>	Date: <b>2/12/25</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312         </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311         </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310         </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313         </div> </div>				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
RHOADS, Karl (C)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley	✓			
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.				✓
AWA, Brenton				✓
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2</b>
Recommendation: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted         <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted         </div>				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<b>Distribution:</b>	Original File with Committee Report	Yellow Clerk's Office	Pink Drafting Agency	Goldenrod Committee File Copy

**\*Only one measure per Record of Votes**