STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2802

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR - 5 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2499

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 2499 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VACANCIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to amend the processes for addressing party candidate and state senator vacancies.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Elections and League of Women Voters of Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that the Uniform and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and its state counterpart require ballots to be transmitted to military and overseas voters at least forty-five days prior to an election. To produce the ballot in a timely manner, significant preparation is required of the Office of Elections. Additionally, the Office of Elections must address challenges and objections that may arise after candidate filing deadlines or primary election results, further impacting the timeline for producing the ballot. Existing law governing regularly scheduled elections accounts for these factors. However, it does not do so for state senate vacancy elections. Under existing law, a vacancy in the state senate may trigger an election in as few as fifty days, leaving insufficient time for ballot preparation and transmission. This measure will clarify and align timelines related to state senate vacancies to ensure

that the Office of Elections has sufficient time to prepare ballots in compliance with state and federal election requirements.

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. 2499 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

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

Committee on Judiciary,

KARL RHOADS, Chair

The Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Judiciary
JDC

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 2499	JDC	2/13/26

☐ 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)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley				✓
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.				✓
AWA, Brenton	✓			
TOTAL	3	—	—	2

Recommendation: ☑ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:

Distribution: Original — File with Committee Report; Yellow — Committee; Pink — Drafting Agency

*Only one measure per Record of Votes

Revised: 01/02/26