

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 06**, 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1626  
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026  
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 1626, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO YOUTH PENALTIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Prohibit the assessment of any fees, fines, or court costs against a person who was adjudicated for an offense committed while the person was a minor, or against the minor's parent or guardian;
- (2) Encourage the use of community service and other programs that employ aina-based principles; and
- (3) Repeal certain penalties imposed on parents, guardians, or other persons associated with unaccompanied minors or unmarried minors in dance halls.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary; Office of the Public Defender; Office of Hawaiian Affairs; American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i; Debt Free Justice Hawai'i; 'Ekolu Mea Nui; Nā 'Ōpio Waiwai; Libertarian Party of Hawaii; Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i; Hale Kipa; Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice; and eight individuals.



Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Education.

Your Committee finds that financial penalties imposed on youth create long term financial and emotional burdens that fall disproportionately on low income families and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth, without improving accountability or public safety. Your Committee further finds that these monetary sanctions are rarely collected, inconsistently imposed across jurisdictions, and function more as poverty penalties that prolong court involvement, destabilize families, and impede access to education, housing, and employment well into adulthood. This measure will promote fairer, more developmentally appropriate accountability and allow youth to repair harm while remaining connected to family, school, and community.

Your Committee requests that as this measure moves through the legislative process, consideration be given to an effective date of July 1, 2027, with part VII to be effective upon approval, to allow sufficient time for the Judiciary to make and test the operational changes in the district courts necessary to implement this measure.

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. 1626, H.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

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



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DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



