

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 06 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1628
H.D. 2

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. 1628, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO COMPASSIONATE RELEASE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a compassionate release protocol for certain ill or seriously debilitated incarcerated persons.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Office of the Public Defender; Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission; American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i; First Unitarian Church of Honolulu; Faith Action for Community Equity; 'Ekolu Mea Nui; Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice; FAMM; Community Alliance on Prisons; Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation; Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center; Ka Lāhui Hawai'i; Ohana Ho'opakele; Hawaii Disability Rights Center; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Crime Victim Compensation Commission; Hawaii Paroling Authority; Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu; The Sex Abuse Treatment Center; and one individual.



Your Committee finds that the State's correctional facilities are experiencing rising medical and custodial challenges due to an aging and medically complex incarcerated population, resulting in significant increases in health care costs and operational strain. Your Committee further finds that many seriously ill or debilitated individuals no longer meaningfully benefit from incarceration and often require a level of care that the correctional system is unable to provide without extraordinary expense. Your Committee believes that creating a formal compassionate release process promotes dignity, reduces costs, and ensures that individuals with severe medical needs can receive appropriate care in community settings.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Amending the definition of "incarcerated person";
- (2) Clarifying who may initiate an application for compassionate release;
- (3) Clarifying the procedures for providing notice of an administrative hearing and specifying that the purpose is to notify victims;
- (4) Requiring the annual reports to be made publicly available no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session;
- (5) Clarifying that the purpose of the working group is to develop initial administrative rules and requiring the working group to cease after the administrative rules are adopted; and
- (6) 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. 1628, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1628, H.D. 2.



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, flowing style with a large initial "D".

DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Bill/Resolution No.: HB1628 HD1	Committee Referral: PBG, JHA	Date: 2/25/2026		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
JHA Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. TARNAS, David A. (C)	✓			
2. POEPOE, Mahina (VC)	✓			
3. BELATTI, Della Au				✓
4. COCHRAN, Elle	✓			
5. HASHEM, Mark J.	✓			
6. KAHALOA, Kirstin	✓			
7. SAYAMA, Jackson D.	✓			
8. TAKAYAMA, Gregg	✓			
9. GARCIA, Diamond	✓			
10. SHIMIZU, Garner M.	✓			
TOTAL (10)	9	0	0	1
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <div style="text-align:center; font-size: small;">committee acronym(s)</div>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				