

Honolulu, Hawaii  
**FEB 18** , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1959  
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 Human Services & Homelessness, to which was referred H.B. No. 1959 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to extend for five years certain provisions relating to abuse of family or household members, including establishing a petty misdemeanor offense of abuse of family or household members, clarifying penalties for violations, and allowing deferred acceptance of guilty pleas for misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor abuse of family or household members offenses.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Crime Victim Compensation Commission; Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women; Hawai'i County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney; Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Maui; Kaua'i County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney; Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence; and one individual.

Your Committee finds that this measure extends a pilot program originally established by Act 19, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020 (Act 19), that created a petty misdemeanor offense of abuse of family or household members. The pilot program was established



in response to concerns raised by survivors about the unintended consequences of the criminal justice response to domestic violence cases, which relied heavily on criminal convictions of lower-level domestic violence cases. These convictions in turn could create barriers to employment, housing, and financial stability for impacted individuals, ultimately undermining survivor safety and economic security.

Your Committee further finds that Act 19 required the Judiciary to submit reports to the Legislature prior to the Regular Sessions of 2022 through 2026, relating to the pilot project that is being extended pursuant to this measure. However, although the pilot project itself is being extended, the reporting requirements are not. Your Committee notes the testimony from the Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which recommended that the Judiciary continue to collect and report data during the extension of the pilot program. Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaii Affairs, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider extending the Judiciary's reporting requirements originally established by Act 19.

Your Committee has amended this measure by changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion.

Your Committee notes that the effective date of this measure must be June 29, 2026, since this measure needs to go into effect one day before the repeal and reenactment provisions of Act 19 and Act 238, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, which take effect June 30, 2026.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1959, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1959, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Human Services &  
Homelessness,



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LISA MARTEN, Chair



