

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 06 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1959
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. 1959, H.D. 1, 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 the petty misdemeanor offense of abuse of a family or household member, clarification of penalties, and authorization for deferred acceptance of guilty pleas for misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor abuse offenses.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Public Defender; Crime Victim Compensation Commission; Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Maui; Office of the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Hawai'i; Law Office of Georgette A. Yaindl, LLC; Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence; and four individuals.

Your Committee finds that domestic violence remains a pervasive and complex issue in the State and that the statutory framework governing petty misdemeanor abuse offenses and related deferred plea options continue to play a critical role in holding offenders accountable while reducing unintended harm to survivors.



Your Committee further finds that these provisions help manage court backlogs, allow for more consistent charging, and provide pathways for appropriate intervention without destabilizing family safety or economic security. Your Committee believes that extending these provisions will allow the State to collect sufficient data, sustain important enforcement tools, and support a more effective and survivor centered response to domestic violence.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Specifying that the courts may grant a deferred acceptance of guilty plea only for petty misdemeanor offenses, rather than for misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor offenses;
- (2) Extending the sunset date for all provisions of Act 19, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020, that are subject to the sunset provision from June 30, 2026, to June 30, 2031;
- (3) Requiring the Judiciary to submit a report regarding cases filed with the Judiciary involving the offense of abuse of family or household member;
- (4) Inserting a savings clause; and
- (5) 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. 1959, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1959, H.D. 2.



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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Tarnas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



