

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20, 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2138
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 Transportation, to which was referred H.B. No. 2138, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a Hilo-Kona Transportation Pilot Program within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to study, plan, evaluate, implement, and trial transportation routes and services connecting Hilo and Kona.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Research and Development of the County of Hawaii; Hawaii Transportation Association; and two individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Your Committee finds that limited, unreliable, and costly transportation options between Hilo and Kona have long created barriers to workforce participation, economic opportunity, and equitable access to essential services in Hawaii County. Many residents commute significant distances for employment in construction, hospitality, retail, and other industries, often facing travel times of up to two hours each way, while students, patients seeking medical care, and visitors similarly lack



efficient interregional mobility options. By establishing a Hilo-Kona Transportation Pilot Program within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to study, plan, test, and assess potential service models, this measure promotes informed decision-making, advances regional equity, and supports long-term economic resilience without prematurely committing to permanent infrastructure or operational systems.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Transportation that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2138, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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



DARIUS KILA, Chair



