

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2153
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. 2153 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish, and appropriate funds for, the Kūpa'a Law Enforcement Retention Bonus Program within the Department of Law Enforcement to provide retention bonuses to Department law enforcement officers.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary; Department of Law Enforcement; Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO; and two individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Office of Collective Bargaining. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of Information Practices; Department of the Attorney General; and United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO.

Your Committee finds that the Department of Law Enforcement continues to experience significant challenges in recruiting and retaining sworn personnel due to longstanding pay disparities with county police departments and the high cost of living in the State. These staffing shortages affect operational readiness and the continuity of statewide public safety functions. This measure



will help address these challenges by providing retention bonuses that support workforce stability and improve the Department's ability to recruit and retain qualified officers.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the retention bonus program is subject to collective bargaining and may be implemented notwithstanding otherwise applicable laws when negotiated through collective bargaining;
- (2) Clarifying that confidentiality provisions do not override public disclosure requirements under the State's Uniform Information Practices Act;
- (3) Specifying that the appropriation shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal biennium and shall instead lapse on June 30, 2028;
- (4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider the following appropriation amounts for the Kūpa'a Law Enforcement Retention Bonus Program:

- (1) \$5,040,000 for the first year;
- (2) \$5,490,000 for the second year; and
- (3) \$5,940,000 for the third year.

Your Committee notes that the Kūpa'a Law Enforcement Retention Bonus Program is set to end on June 30, 2028.

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. 2153, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass



Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2153, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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



DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Bill/Resolution No.: HB2153	Committee Referral: JHA, FIN	Date: 2/18/2026		
<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)	8	0	0	2
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____ 				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				