

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12, 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2181
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. 2181 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Beginning July 1, 2027, require the Judiciary to develop, implement, and administer an automated court appearance reminder system that generates text message and electronic mail notifications for scheduled future court appearances;
- (2) Require a person making an arrest or issuing a citation to document the offender's mobile telephone number or a mobile telephone number at which the offender may be reliably contacted; and
- (3) Appropriate funds to the Judiciary for the automated court appearance reminder system.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Public Defender; Community Alliance on Prisons; R Street Institute; and four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Judiciary.



Your Committee finds that failures to appear in court frequently stem from confusion or logistical barriers rather than intentional noncompliance. Your Committee further finds that automated court appearance reminders provide a practical and effective means of improving attendance, reducing avoidable delays, and promoting efficient court operations. Your Committee believes that implementing an opt-out automated reminder system will enhance access to justice while supporting the effective administration of the courts.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that participation in the automated court appearance reminder system is voluntary and that persons may opt out of participating in the system at any time;
- (2) Specifying that mobile telephone numbers and electronic mail addresses provided to the automated court appearance reminder system may not be used for investigative, intelligence, or enforcement purposes or shared with third parties except to facilitate reminders or as required by law;
- (3) Clarifying that a person's refusal to provide a mobile telephone number or electronic mail address shall not be held against the person, considered evidence of guilt, or used adversely against the person in criminal proceedings;
- (4) Clarifying that failure of the automated court appearance reminder system to send a notification, or failure of a person to receive a notification, does not relieve the person of the legal obligation to appear for a scheduled court appearance;
- (5) Requiring the Judiciary to collect, maintain, and report data necessary to evaluate the administration and effectiveness of the automated court appearance reminder system;
- (6) Clarifying the collection of contact information by persons making arrests or issuing citations to



facilitate the automated court appearance reminder system;

- (7) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion, but specifying that the appropriation shall take effect on July 1, 2026; and
- (8) 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 work with the Judiciary to determine the amount needed for the appropriation.

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. 2181, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2181, 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



