

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 19 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2197  
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. 2197 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO PROPERTY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Specify a process by which property owners may utilize law enforcement officers to remove unauthorized individuals from dwellings;
- (2) Establish the criminal offenses of squatting and fraudulent sale or lease of residential real property;
- (3) Classify the type of property damage typically inflicted by squatters as a form of criminal property damage in the second degree; and
- (4) Classify the falsification of documentation typically performed by squatters as a form of unsworn falsification to authorities.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS; Collection Law Section of the Hawaii State Bar Association; Grassroot Institute of Hawaii;



and Waikiki Neighborhood Board. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds that unauthorized occupation of residential dwellings can create unsafe living conditions, disrupt family stability, and strain social service systems when property owners and affected residents seek emergency assistance. Your Committee further finds that timely intervention is necessary to prevent further harm to homeowners and to connect individuals involved in such situations with appropriate services when needed. This measure establishes a clear process for removing unauthorized occupants while preserving opportunities for safety assessments and access to support.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee notes that this measure contains an unspecified threshold amount for whether the damages from a person's intentional or knowing damage to a dwelling, while being unlawfully present in it, rises to being classified as criminal property damage in the second degree. Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriate threshold amount.

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. 2197, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2197, 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



