

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12, 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2356
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 Public Safety, to which was referred H.B.
No. 2356 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to provide a certificate of suitability for employment to offenders who have satisfied all sentencing and post-release requirements;
- (2) Require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to work with various entities to educate stakeholders about the certificate;
- (3) Require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to work with the United States Department of Defense to increase the likelihood that eligible offenders can obtain any relevant security clearance; and
- (4) Appropriate funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.



Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Public Defender and seven individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission.

Your Committee finds that there are often significant barriers to employment for persons who are released from incarceration after serving their sentences. This measure seeks to help reduce such barriers by requiring the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to provide certificates to formerly incarcerated individuals to help demonstrate suitability for employment if certain criteria are met.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Renaming the "certificate of suitability for employment" to the "certificate of rehabilitation";
- (2) Clarifying that the Hawaii Paroling Authority shall retain primary responsibility for tracking and confirming the post-release obligations of formerly incarcerated individuals;
- (3) Eliminating the "diminished likelihood of recurrence" as a component of the certificate of rehabilitation;
- (4) Instead of requiring the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to work with the United States Department of Defense to increase the likelihood that eligible offenders will obtain a security clearance post-release if relevant to their employment pursuits, authorizing the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to work with state agencies to increase the availability and likelihood that eligible offenders will obtain a security clearance post-release if relevant to their employment pursuits with the State;
- (5) Changing its effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (6) 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 Public Safety that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2356, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2356, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Labor.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Public Safety,

Delta A Belatti

DELLA AU BELATTI, Chair



HSCR 223-26

Bill/Resolution No.: HB2356	Committee Referral: PBS, LAB, FIN	Date: 2/11/2026
☐ The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.		
The recommendation is to:		
☒	Pass, unamended (as is)	☒ Pass, with amendments (HD) ☐ Hold
☐	☐ Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)	

PBS Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. BELATTI, Della Au (C)	✓			
2. IWAMOTO, Kim Coco (VC)	✓			
3. HASHEM, Mark J.	✓			
4. ICHIYAMA, Linda	✓			
5. MORIKAWA, Dee	✓			
6. POEPOE, Mahina	✓			
7. WOODSON, Justin H.	✓			
8. SHIMIZU, Garner M.	✓			
9. SOUZA, Kanani	✓			
TOTAL (9)	9			

The recommendation is: ☒ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted

If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation.
 committee acronym(s)

Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____

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