

Honolulu, Hawaii
FEB 11 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2443
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. 2443 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO DISASTER SERVICES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to add disability- and access- and-functional-needs-related planning, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation to the duties of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities; Disability and Communication Access Board; Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency; Office of Wellness and Resilience; Hawaii Disability Rights Center; Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii; Hawai'i Self-Advocacy Advisory Council; and five individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General; Executive Office on Aging; and Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission.

Your Committee finds that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as individuals with physical, sensory, psychiatric, and cognitive disabilities, are often disproportionately harmed during emergencies--not because of the disaster itself but because emergency systems are not designed



with access and functional needs in mind. Your Committee further finds that this measure strengthens disaster resilience for vulnerable populations and strengthens Hawaii's overall emergency preparedness system.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Further clarifying the proposed new duties of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency;
- (2) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount;
- (3) Changing its effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) 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 appropriating \$200,000, to be allocated as follows:

- (1) \$100,000 for the establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) disability integration specialist position, which shall serve as the emergency management specialist within the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency; and
- (2) \$100,000 for programming support for disability community projects, such as accessibility improvements in emergency shelters, public service announcements in accessible formats, training programs for shelter staff, and other projects to enhance disaster resilience for individuals with disabilities.

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. 2443, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2443, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



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

Debra A. Belatti

DELLA AU BELATTI, Chair



