

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **3292**

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 30 2026**

RE: H.B. No. 2443  
H.D. 1  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Public Safety and Military Affairs and Health and Human Services, to which was referred H.B. No. 2443, H.D. 1, entitled:

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

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Integrate the needs of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs into emergency planning, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities;
- (2) Establish a Disability Integration Specialist position, to be located in the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, who shall provide programming support for disability community projects that promote accessibility, inclusion, and equity in disaster management; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, Disability and Communication Access Board, Office of Wellness and Resilience, State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Hawaii Civil Rights



Commission, Hawaii Disability Rights Center, Hawai'i Self-Advocacy Advisory Council, Palehua Townhouses Association, Aloha Independent Living Hawaii, LeadingAge Pacific West, and thirteen individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General.

Your Committees find that one in five residents of the State has a disability and may require additional support before, during, and after disasters. Residents with disabilities encounter disproportionate risks, including difficulty evacuating without proper support, lack of accessible transportation, and barriers to receiving emergency and evacuation orders in alternate formats. These residents also often face obstacles accessing shelters and receiving appropriate emergency care and post-disaster relief, such as housing, food, and financial assistance. This measure ensures that the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency has both the funding and personnel to meet the needs of residents who have disabilities.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language that:
  - (A) Permanently exempts the Disability Integration Specialist position from civil service law;
  - (B) Requires the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to develop and implement a statewide public education and communications program;
  - (C) Requires the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to submit annual reports to the Legislature;
  - (D) Appropriates an unspecified amount to implement the statewide public education and communications program;
  - (E) Requires the Governor or mayor of a county to provide an American Sign Language interpreter during each official announcement broadcast via



television or the Internet during a state of emergency;

- (F) Requires the Governor or mayor of a county to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that the American Sign Language interpreter's face, body, arms, and hands are visible during the broadcast;
  - (G) Requires the Governor or mayor of a county to provide a standardized pool feed that includes the American Sign Language interpreter in a picture-in-picture window not less than one quarter the size of the primary video and not blocked or covered by captions, graphics, or other on-screen text; and
  - (H) Appropriates an unspecified amount for the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to expand access to bilingual resources and services;
- (2) Inserting additional legislative findings; and
  - (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Public Safety and Military Affairs and Health and Human Services that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2443, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2443, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committees on Public Safety and  
Military Affairs and Health and  
Human Services,



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



CAROL FUKUNAGA, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Third Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs**  
**PSM**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>HB2443 HDI</b>	Committee Referral: <b>PSM/HHS, WAM</b>	Date: <b>3/23/26</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
FUKUNAGA, Carol (C)	x			
LEE, Chris (VC)	x			
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.	x			
INOUYE, Lorraine R.	x			
DECORTE, Samantha	x			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>			
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink File with Committee Report     Committee     Drafting Agency				

**\*Only one measure per Record of Votes**

