

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 19

, 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2600

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. 2600 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Office of the Public Defender for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Deputy Public Defender III position.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Public Defender; The Legal Clinic; Community Alliance on Prisons; Mercado de la Raza; Maui Roots Reborn; El Pueblo en Accion Maui; Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights; Pacific Gateway Center; William S. Richardson School of Law Refugee & Immigration Clinic; ACLU of Hawai'i; and numerous individuals.

Your Committee finds that although the Office of the Public Defender is a statewide office, the Office has no attorneys who are assigned to provide assistance to attorneys statewide in immigration matters. The Office of the Public Defender instead relies on outside agencies or from the experience or research into immigration issues provided by other attorneys to navigate the complex area of immigration law. Your Committee further finds



that the funding provided by this measure allows the Office of the Public Defender to dedicate one position to focus on immigration law as it relates to the criminal cases handled by the Office's attorneys.

Your Committee has amended this measure by changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion.

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. 2600, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2600, 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,



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DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Bill/Resolution No.: <i>HB2600</i>	Committee Referral: <i>JHA, FIN</i>	Date: <i>2/13/2026</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
JHA Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. TARNAS, David A. (C)	✓			
2. POEPOE, Mahina (VC)	✓			
3. BELATTI, Della Au	✓			
4. COCHRAN, Elle				✓
5. HASHEM, Mark J.	✓			
6. KAHALOA, Kirstin	✓			
7. SAYAMA, Jackson D.	✓			
8. TAKAYAMA, Gregg				✓
9. GARCIA, Diamond			✓	
10. SHIMIZU, Garner M.		✓		
TOTAL (10)	<i>6</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. _____ committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: <i>[Signature]</i>				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee      Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office      Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				