

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 30, 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2109
S.D. 2
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 S.B. No. 2109, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMUNICATIONS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to develop and implement a statewide public education and communications program to increase households' emergency preparedness consistent with the Agency's fourteen-day essential supplies recommendation;
- (2) Require 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;
- (3) Require 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; and



- (4) Require 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 no less than one quarter the size of the primary video and not blocked or covered by captions, graphics, or other on-screen text.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency; State Health Planning and Development Agency; Disability and Communications Access Board; The Legal Clinic; Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; Hawaii Disability Rights Center; Hawaiian Humane Society; Roots Reborn; Kona Indivisible; Matriarchy Rising; and six individuals.

Your Committee finds that the development and implementation of a clear, consistent statewide public education and communications program ensures that all residents, including immigrants, limited English proficient individuals, and other underserved communities, receive the preparedness information they need to be safe and self-sufficient during an emergency.

Your Committee further finds that American Sign Language interpretation during official emergency announcements, with clear visibility standards, helps ensure that deaf and hard-of-hearing residents can receive emergency information in real time. Your Committee finds that this measure is a practical, life-safety means of addressing two critical gaps in Hawaii's emergency-preparedness and -communications infrastructure and ensures emergency communications are accessible to all residents of the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Requiring the Governor or mayor, as applicable, to provide a primary pool feed, rather than a standardized pool feed, during any live official announcement and removing specific requirements for the size and placement of the picture-in-picture window;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and



- (3) 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 S.B. No. 2109, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2109, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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

Alle A Belatti

DELLA AU BELATTI, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Public Safety

Bill/Resolution No.: SB 2109, SD2	Committee Referral: PBS, FIN	Date: 3/27/2024		
<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)				
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			3
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <div style="text-align:center; font-size: small;">committee acronym(s)</div>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				