

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2131

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 09 2026**

RE: S.B. No. 2151  
S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs, to which was referred S.B. No. 2151 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Clarify state and local authority during a state or local state of emergency;
- (2) Add a definition of "severe weather warning"; and
- (3) Allow the Legislature to terminate a state of emergency and city councils to terminate a local state of emergency.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Earthjustice, Grassroots Institute of Hawaii, League of Women Voters of Hawaii, Sierra Club of Hawai'i, Public First Law Center, and two individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, Department of Emergency Management of the City and County of Honolulu, and Libertarian Party of Hawaii.



Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of Information Practices.

Your Committee finds that existing statutory provisions governing states of emergency are vague and overly permissive of emergency actions, allowing the governor's and mayors' use of emergency powers without oversight and with few restrictions. Additionally, recent court decisions threaten to exacerbate this problem by allowing the use of emergency powers to address long-term issues of public policy. Without legislative action, these court decisions would undermine the balance of powers that is central to effective governance in the State. This measure therefore seeks to address the potential abuse of emergency powers.

Your Committee notes that securing a supermajority vote for any legislative act, no matter how important, is extremely challenging, and therefore this measure should be amended to limit the use of emergency powers in the first place.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Restricting the definition of "disaster" to include only sudden, specified events; and
- (2) Clarifying that an emergency means an event that causes or is likely to cause catastrophic harm and immediate danger, and that can be averted or minimized by timely action.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2151, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2151, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Public Safety and  
Military Affairs,



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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>SB 2151</b>	Committee Referral: <b>PSM, JDC</b>	Date: <b>1-28-2026</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)	P			
LEE, Chris (VC)	P			
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.				X
INOUYE, Lorraine R.	X			
DECORTE, Samantha	P			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>1</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <div style="text-align:center; font-family: cursive; font-size: 1.2em;">  </div>				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original                              Yellow                              Pink File with Committee Report              Committee                              Drafting Agency				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes