

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 09 , 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2203
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 Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred S.B. No. 2203, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish the offense of use of a mask or facial covering by a law enforcement officer.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from one member of the Hawai'i County Council; Community Alliance on Prisons; UNITE HERE Local 5; Imua Alliance; Libertarian Party of Hawaii; Hawaii Filipino Lawyers Association; Roots Reborn; El Pueblo en Acción Maui; Hawai'i Public Health Institute; The Legal Clinic; ACLU Hawai'i; Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights; Waipahu Safe Haven Immigrant/Migrant Resources Center; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from two individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Hawai'i Police Department.

Your Committee finds that requiring law enforcement officers to be identifiable while interacting with the public promotes transparency, accountability, and public trust. Your Committee further finds that limiting the use of masks or facial coverings



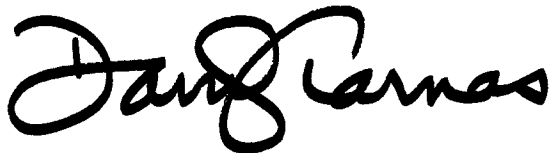
by law enforcement officers, while providing clear and narrowly tailored exceptions for undercover operations and officer safety, appropriately balances the need for effective law enforcement with constitutional principles and democratic values. Your Committee believes that establishing a misdemeanor offense for noncompliance provides a clear and enforceable standard to support these objectives.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Amending the preamble;
- (2) Amending the definitions of "law enforcement agency" and "mask or facial covering";
- (3) Deleting the new section-specific definition of "law enforcement officer" so that the existing general definition applicable to the chapter applies;
- (4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) 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 Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2203, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2203, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary &
Hawaiian Affairs,



DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



