

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3084

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 06 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2314
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 Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 2314, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require that whenever there is a difference between the English and Hawaii version of law that is material to its interpretation, priority shall be given to the language that aligns with the intent of the legislature as evidenced by legislative history, context, and purpose; and
- (2) Clarify that Hawaiian shall not be required for public acts and transactions, but is welcomed.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, University of Hawai'i System, Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, and one individual.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.



Your Committee finds that there is an existing statutory preference for the English version of a law when the English and Hawaii texts differ. Establishing a neutral method of interpretation based on legislative intent for determining which language version should take precedence in these cases reflects the longstanding principle that statutory meaning is grounded in legislative intent and would ensure both languages are treated with the equal dignity befitting their status as co-official languages of the State. This measure aligns the State with well-functioning practices among other jurisdictions that operate within bilingual legal frameworks and honors the cultural and legal significance of Olelo Hawaii.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2314, S.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



