

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2802

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR - 5 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2499

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. 2499 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VACANCIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to amend the processes for addressing party candidate and state senator vacancies.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Elections and League of Women Voters of Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that the Uniform and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and its state counterpart require ballots to be transmitted to military and overseas voters at least forty-five days prior to an election. To produce the ballot in a timely manner, significant preparation is required of the Office of Elections. Additionally, the Office of Elections must address challenges and objections that may arise after candidate filing deadlines or primary election results, further impacting the timeline for producing the ballot. Existing law governing regularly scheduled elections accounts for these factors. However, it does not do so for state senate vacancy elections. Under existing law, a vacancy in the state senate may trigger an election in as few as fifty days, leaving insufficient time for ballot preparation and transmission. This measure will clarify and align timelines related to state senate vacancies to ensure



that the Office of Elections has sufficient time to prepare ballots in compliance with state and federal election requirements.

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. 2499 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

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



KARL RHOADS, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
 Committee on Judiciary
 JDC

Bill / Resolution No.:* SB 2499	Committee Referral: JDC	Date: 2/13/26		
<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
RHOADS, Karl (C)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley				✓
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.				✓
AWA, Brenton	✓			
TOTAL	3	—	—	2
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes