

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **2353**

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 18 2026**

RE: S.B. No. 2540  
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 Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 2540 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO YOUTH PENALTIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Prohibit the assessment of any fees, fines, or court costs against a person who was adjudicated for an offense committed during the person's minority, or against the person's parent or guardian, and discharges all related debt obligations assessed before the effective date of the Act;
- (2) Encourage the use of community service and other programs that employ aina-based principles; and
- (3) Repeal certain penalties imposed on parents, guardians, or other persons associated with unaccompanied children in streets and unmarried minors in dance halls.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Office of the Public Defender, Hale Kipa, Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i, 'Ekolu Mea Nui, ACLU of Hawai'i, Debt Free Justice Hawai'i, Nā 'Ōpio Waiwai, and five individuals.

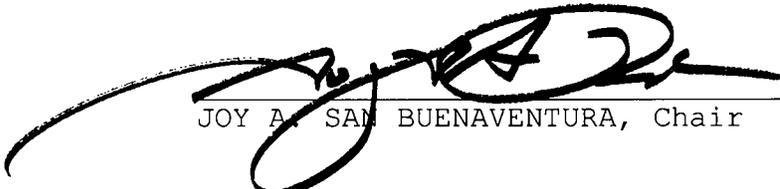


Your Committee finds that the imposition of fines, fees, and court costs on minors, and often their families, creates long-term financial burdens that disproportionately impact low-income families. Your Committee further finds that these penalties do not promote accountability or public safety; instead, they perpetuate cycles of poverty and justice system involvement that can follow young people into adulthood. This measure encourages a more equitable and appropriate justice system for young people in the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by inserting an effective date of July 1, 2027.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health and Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2540, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2540, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Health and Human  
Services,



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



