

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 23, 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2645
S.D. 3
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 Public Safety, to which was referred S.B. No. 2645, S.D. 3, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FIRE PREVENTION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish the State Fire Code as the minimum statewide standard for fire and life safety;
- (2) Prohibit the counties from adopting, amending, or enforcing any ordinance, rule, or code provision that is less restrictive than the State Fire Code;
- (3) Establish the State Fire and Life Safety Special Fund;
- (4) Repeal the requirement for each county fire chief to inspect public thoroughfares;
- (5) Limit the frequency of fire and safety inspections at state facilities by the Office of the State Fire Marshal to no more than once every three years;



- (6) Change the method of appointment of the State Fire Marshal from selection by the State Fire Marshal Selection Commission to appointment by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate; and
- (7) Amend Act 302, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, by replacing two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions for fire inspectors and three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE) positions for fire investigators with four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE) positions for assistant fire marshals.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the State Fire Marshal and State Fire Council. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of the Governor; Department of Land and Natural Resources; American Institute of Architects, Hawai'i State Council; and Hawai'i Wildfire Management Organization.

Your Committee finds that this measure would improve statutory frameworks, strengthen statewide consistency in fire and life safety standards, and more clearly align the structure and function of the Office of the State Fire Marshal with its core public safety mission. Your Committee further finds that this measure represents a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to modernizing fire safety governance in the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Maintaining the existing method of appointment of the State Fire Marshal by the State Fire Marshal Selection Commission;
- (2) Changing its effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) 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 Public Safety that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2645, S.D. 3, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass



Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2645, S.D. 3, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Public Safety,

Della A. Belatti

DELLA AU BELATTI, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Public Safety

Bill/Resolution No.: SB2445 SD3	Committee Referral: PBS, FIN	Date: 3/18/2026		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
PBS Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. BELATTI, Della Au (C)	✓			
2. IWAMOTO, Kim Coco (VC)	✓			
3. HASHEM, Mark J.	✓			
4. ICHIYAMA, Linda	✓			
5. MORIKAWA, Dee	✓			
6. POEPOE, Mahina	✓			
7. WOODSON, Justin H.	✓			
8. SHIMIZU, Garner M.	✓			
9. SOUZA, Kanani	✓			
TOTAL (9)	9			
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <small>committee acronym(s)</small>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				