

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2811

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR - 5 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2661  
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. 2661 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO NEPOTISM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to repeal language in the State's Code of Ethics that exempts the legislative and judicial branches from prohibitions against nepotism in public employment.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission and three individuals.

Your Committee finds that while existing law applies nepotism restrictions on most state employees, the Legislature and Judiciary are exempt. A consistent statewide standard would ensure that employment decisions are based on merit rather than personal relationships. This measure will strengthen public trust in government by establishing a uniform nepotism standard across all branches of state government.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Expanding the prohibition on nepotism in public employment to include judges and legislators by inserting a definition of "employee"; and



- (2) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

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. 2661, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2661, S.D. 1, and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

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



---

KARL RHOADS, Chair



