

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3037

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 06 2026**

RE: S.B. No. 2688  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means, to which was referred S.B. No. 2688, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO COMPASSIONATE RELEASE,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish a protocol for compassionate release for certain ill or seriously debilitated incarcerated persons.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, ACLU Hawai'i, Community Alliance on Prisons, Hawaii Disability Rights Center, and six individuals.

Your Committees received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Crime Victim Compensation Commission, Hawaii Paroling Authority, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Maui, and one individual.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Office of the Public Defender, Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission, FAMM, Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice, Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, Jikoen Hongwanji, and four individuals.



Your Committees find the State has historically relied on internal policy rather than statute to address compassionate release, creating concerns regarding transparency and timely consideration. An in-depth 2022 study of compassionate release programs nationwide graded Hawaii's program a "F" due to its policy design, inconsistent rules, and lack of clarity. Improving the compassionate release program would make the prison system more humane and reduce the financial cost borne by the State. This measure aligns the State's compassionate release program with nationally recognized best practices and expresses the State's commitment to the aloha spirit.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2688, S.D. 1, and recommend that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means,

  
DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, Chair

  
KARL RHOADS, Chair



