

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1334-26

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 24 , 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2851  
S.D. 1  
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 Transportation, to which was referred S.B. No. 2851, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO DEAF INDIVIDUALS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to authorize deaf motor vehicle owners to register their vehicle as being owned by a deaf individual so that a deafness designation appears when a law enforcement officer accesses the motor vehicle's information.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Disability and Communication Access Board and four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Customer Services of the City and County of Honolulu.

Your Committee finds that routine traffic stops can present heightened risks when law enforcement officers are unaware that a driver is deaf, as a deaf individual may be unable to respond to verbal commands or may communicate in ways that are misinterpreted. Your Committee further finds that improving communication between deaf drivers and law enforcement officers is critical to ensuring public safety and protecting the rights of individuals with hearing impairments. By authorizing a deafness

2026-2538 SB2851 HD1 HSCR HMSO



designation on motor vehicle registrations that is accessible to law enforcement, this measure promotes safer interactions between deaf individuals and law enforcement officers and prevents miscommunication.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying the definition for "deaf";
- (2) Deleting provisions that would have required the use of income tax forms to verify a hearing disability; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee notes the concerns expressed in testimony and the request by the Department of Customer Services of the City and County of Honolulu that the effective date for this measure be January 1, 2028, to allow adequate time for implementation.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Transportation that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2851, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2851, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

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



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DARIUS KILA, Chair



