

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2704

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 23 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2919
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 Ways and Means, to which was referred S.B. No. 2919 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate moneys to hire an additional full-time employee at the Office of the Public Defender.

More specifically, this measure provides funding for a full-time attorney in the Office of the Public Defender to offer counsel on constitutional questions and related legal matters.

Your Committee received written comments in support of this measure from the Office of the Public Defender and American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that the Office of the Public Defender is a statewide agency that fulfills the State's obligation to provide legal counsel for indigent persons. Your Committee recognizes that constitutionally effective representation requires attorneys in the Office of the Public Defender to be apprised of the constitutional, civil, and statutory ramifications of their cases. Your Committee further finds that all current attorney positions at the Office of the Public Defender are needed to



provide representation in trial and appellate matters. Your Committee finds, therefore, that the Office of the Public Defender requires an additional attorney who can advise its attorneys regarding constitutional issues and related legal matters.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriation from \$125,004 to an unspecified amount; and
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2050, to facilitate further discussion on the measure.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Ways and Means that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2919, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2919, S.D. 1.

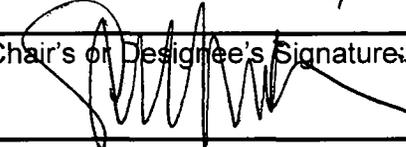
Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Ways and Means,


DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, Chair



The Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Ways and Means
WAM

Bill / Resolution No.:* SB2919	Committee Referral: JDC, WAM	Date: 02/19/2026		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
DELA CRUZ, Donovan M. (C)	X			
MORIWAKI, Sharon Y. (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn	X			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C.	X			
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.	X			
INOUYE, Lorraine R.	X			
KANUHA, Dru Mamo	X			
KIDANI, Michelle N.				X
KIM, Donna Mercado	X			
LEE, Chris	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim"				X
WAKAI, Glenn	X			
FEVELLA, Kurt	X			
TOTAL	11	0	0	2
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes